

ELLEN TERRY'S MEMOIRS

With Preface, Notes
And Additional Biographical Chapters

by
EDITH CRAIG
&
CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

LONDON
VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD
14 Henrietta Street Covent Garden
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It may seem strange to those who discerned the fine quality of her autobiography when they first read it years ago that this literary fame should not have come to her until her letters to Bernard Shaw were published. Perhaps the explanation is that the memoirs of all celebrities who are not professional writers are approached with a certain prejudice. It is considered extremely unlikely that they will have any literary merit, and, such is the power of preconceived notions, when they possess it, it is often not perceived. Critical opinion of the memoirs of actors or actresses is further biased by an old tradition that the greatest of them

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*1 Lowndes Street S.W.
28 November 1908.*

DEAR LADY,—

Once you were my hostess, and Henry Irving my host, at supper in the Beefsteak Room; and again, long before that, because you were Ophelia, Portia, Juliet, Beatrice, you were part of my youth.

But I make no excuse for writing. I have just finished *The Story Of My Life*. I shall begin it again tomorrow. Meanwhile I wish to thank you for having written the book with all my heart, and to tell you with all my head that it has its place with the very few autobiographies that will always be read. It angers me that reviewers should not have proclaimed this. What are they for?

The next time I am bullied into "responding for Literature," I shall tell them how great your work is, and how little they are not to have said so. Everybody who is alive enough to love life without fearing death is in love with your book. Your book is our youth, and it has in it more beauty than others show, more duty than other do.

You will never "have done with being beautiful" because by this book you have managed to play that part forever.

Yours gratefully,
GEORGE WYNDHAM

When Wyndham wrote the last sentence of his perfect tribute, it did not occur to him that as time went on that part of Ellen Terry's to which he alludes might be played in a theatre closed to the reading public. Yet this is what would have happened if this new edition of her book had not been published. For many years previously it had been out of print, and people whose interest in it had been roused by a quotation from its pages in an article, or by some public reference or other to its fascinations, found the quest of a copy required considerable pertinacity if it was to be successful. Wyndham's opinion that it has its place with the very few autobiographies "that will always be read" could be only very inadequately vindicated as long as it could not be read at all without an effort to which people are averse in these most labour-saving times. Now that the first step has been taken towards putting it among the classics, there is a hope that it will often be reprinted in the future, and the prophecy that it will always be read be fulfilled. At any rate the immediate danger of its going out of circulation and being forgotten has been averted.

are stupid outside their own art. It must be admitted that they have done little to discredit this tradition by their published writings. Their reminiscences usually consist of a series of egotistical anecdotes about their stage triumphs, and not realising that these would have a certain ingenuous charm if told by themselves without any literary pretence, they often delegate the telling to a professional writer. The few letters Irving really wrote himself are of far more interest than the many written for him by the journalists in his retinue at the Lyceum, and one often wishes when one reads the lectures they composed for him that he had expressed his own ideas in his own unaffected way. But he disliked writing, and was too much absorbed in his art to take the slightest interest in anything else. In this he differed from Ellen Terry, who, hard as she worked at the art for which she had an hereditary vocation as well as a natural genius, was never completely absorbed in it. Life interested her in other aspects than in its relation to the theatre; she found it easy and delightful to express this interest in writing. Letters were her medium, and she poured them out by the thousand. There is no better way of learning to do a thing than to do it. It was through the constant practice her correspondence gave her pen that Ellen Terry learned to write with a vividness, a grace, and above all with a directness, which make her autobiography a notable piece of literature.

Only a few people had the courage to rank it as high as that when it was first published. Max Beerbohm was one; the late George Wyndham another. Bernard Shaw, who, three years earlier, in an article on Ellen Terry, contributed to the *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna), had alluded to the "real literary power of her direct and penetrating letters" may have been a third, but I have searched in vain for his tribute to her autobiography. There is plenty of documentary evidence on the other hand that the majority of the reviewers, to whom the timid reader looks for guidance before forming an opinion of a book, could not see, or would not proclaim, the greatness of *The Story of My Life*. They agreed that it was surprisingly good for an actress, but this was not very high praise, since, as we have already pointed out, the standard set by the reminiscences of actors and actresses is very low. Such a patronising tribute did not suffice to turn away the wrath of George Wyndham, as the letter printed below proves. We have quoted it in full because there is more in it of interest than the rebuke to the reviewers. It should help readers of the new generation to understand the position Ellen Terry occupied in the life of her time. Wyndham indirectly confirms

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We have found Ellen Terry the best authority on Ellen Terry. She knew herself, and could reveal herself, better than anyone else. From her letters, diaries and note-books we have derived by far the most valuable material for amplifying and completing her autobiography. We are none the less grateful for the permission given us by some of her correspondents, still living, and by the heirs of others who are dead, to quote passages from their letters to her. Thanks are also due to various authors and publishers who have sanctioned the quotation of passages from books containing references to Ellen Terry.

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Smallhythe, Tenterden, Kent.

June, 1932.

Ellen Terry's record of her life covers a period of about sixty years. She had not quite finished it when in the autumn of 1906, the year of her stage jubilee, she went to America for a long tour under Charles Frohman's management. The two people responsible for this new edition of her book were members of the company she took with her. One of them, her daughter Edith Craig, was engaged as stage-manager, as she had been on Ellen Terry's tours of the English provinces in 1903 and 1904. She also played a part in "The Good Hope", which, with "Nance Oldfield", was alternated with "Captain Brassbound's Conversion" during the American tour. The other, Edith Craig's most intimate friend Christopher St. John, the author of the English version of "The Good Hope", who had for some time acted as a sort of literary henchman to Ellen Terry, had not such an obvious claim to be included in the company. In engaging her Ellen Terry was influenced by the fact that she was collaborating with her in her autobiography. They both hoped that they would be able to get on with it during the tour, but for a variety of reasons this proved impossible. The work had to be put on one side until Ellen Terry returned to England in the summer of 1907. It was resumed in circumstances which account for the undeniable scrappiness of the last chapters. During the American tour Ellen Terry had married again, and absorbed in the present, had lost interest in things past. Having other fish to fry, she left the task of finishing the book almost entirely to her collaborator. She, who had been in close touch with her chief in its earlier phases, now met her rarely. While Ellen Terry was touring the provinces with her husband in "Captain Brassbound's Conversion", there was nothing to do but make shift with her diaries and letters. It was only by resorting to copious quotations that the deserted collaborator was able to bring the autobiography up to the length required by contracts with editors and publishers.

Dr Johnson once expressed the opinion that the finest books in the world owe their existence to duns. This is an encouragement to admit that Ellen Terry's book might never have been written if she had not had the incentive of being eager to retrieve her fortunes. She had lost the greater part of her savings by her first venture into management at the Imperial Theatre in 1903, and any opportunity for making the loss good was welcome during the next few years. She regarded her autobiography as a potboiler, and never took any pride in it. Some of her most intimate friends did not even know she had written it until it was issued in instalments in American and English periodicals.

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compared with the daily massacre of innocents on the battlefield, and artists were particularly prone to pessimism about their value in the world. It is true however that Ellen Terry's public life was less eventful in age than in youth. Unlike her great contemporaries, Sarah Bernhardt, and Eleanora Duse, she was seen but rarely on the stage (although she did not definitely retire from it) for many years before her death. Her career as an actress ended soon after the date at which she ends her autobiography. But because, apart from her genius as an actress, she was a very remarkable woman, her saga is incomplete without the chronicle of her last years.

The obligation of those who possess the data for this chronicle to add it has been more fully realized by them since the publication of Gordon Craig's biographical study *Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self* (1932). Bernard Shaw has described the story, given in the appendix to Craig's book, of how the Shaw-Terry letters came to be published as a "string of flat whoppers", but this humorous aspersion on Craig's accuracy might not prevent his being accepted in the future as a reliable authority on his mother's last years if no comparison were possible between his record and another by some authority with equally impressive credentials. The claim of Ellen Terry's daughter to be such an authority is not likely to be disputed except by the few persons who are of the antiquated opinion that daughters count for less than sons. It is not so much for the instruction of readers to-day as for that of some future biographer of Ellen Terry who may consult both authorities, that the advantage one possessed over the other is emphasised. The daughter was constantly with her mother during the last twenty years of her life; the son saw her at rare intervals after the year 1904 when he went to live abroad. The correspondence between them slackened as Ellen Terry aged, and had ceased altogether for some time before she died. Consequently Gordon Craig had little direct knowledge on which to base the last chapters of his biography, and it is not surprising that as a record they should be inadequate, and at times inaccurate. It seems to us necessary that an accurate record of the last years and death of Ellen Terry should be published. In completing her memoirs we have tried to abstain from making statements which cannot be authenticated, and from presenting fanciful conjectures in the guise of ascertained truths. If we have failed in this we cannot offer the excuse that we knew no better—an excuse which can be offered for the little in-

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CHAPTER I
A CHILD OF THE STAGE

(1848-1858)

§ I

THIS is the first thing I remember.

In the corner of a lean-to whitewashed attic stood a fine, plain, solid oak bureau. By climbing up on to this bureau I could see from the window the glories of the sunset. My attic was on a hill in a large and busy town, and the smoke of a thousand chimneys hung like a grey veil between me and the fires in the sky. When the sun had set, and the scarlet and gold, violet and primrose, and all those magic colours that have no names, had faded into the dark, there were other fires for me to see. The flaming forges came out and terrified while they fascinated my childish imagination.

What did it matter to me that I was locked in, and that my father and mother, with my elder sister Kate, were all at the theatre? I had the sunset, the forges, and the oak bureau.

I cannot say how old I was at this time, but I am sure that it wasn't long after my birth (which I cant remember, although I have often been asked to decide in which house at Coventry I was born!). At any rate, I had not then seen a theatre, and I took to the stage before many years had passed over my head.

Putting together what I remember, and such authentic history as there is of my parents' movements, I gather that this attic was in theatrical lodgings in Glasgow. My father was an actor, my mother an actress, and they were at this time on tour in Scotland. Perhaps this is the place to say that father was the son of an Irish builder, and that he eloped in a chaise with mother, who was the daughter of a Scottish minister. I am afraid I know no details of their romance. As for my less immediate ancestry it is "wropt in mystery." Were we all people of the stage? There was a Daniel Terry who was not only a famous actor in his day, but a friend of Sir Walter Scott's. There was an Eliza Terry, an actress, whose portrait appears in *The Dramatic Mirror* in

not to regret that about six years ago when I moved into a smaller house in London I burned a great many of my old diaries with other unmovable rubbish, yet I find myself yearning for them as I try to summon up remembrance of things past.

Well, it must be "now or never", I said in this year of my stage jubilee when I was urged to write my reminiscences. I consented, and then began to feel frightened. I knew much would be expected of me because I had had an eventful life, and known many of the most distinguished men and women of my time. My fifty years on the stage alone supplied enough material for fifty books, for each of those years had been full of incident. The difficulty was that as I looked back, I could not see my experiences spread out in bold relief. They stretched away from me in a dim perspective with my birth as the vanishing point.

How was I to begin? That was another difficulty! Fortunately it was eased by the remark of a friend who was helping me to arrange the material. "Begin at the beginning. What is the first thing you remember? Write that down as a start."

Once I had acted on this simple and practical suggestion, I felt happier about my task. The clearness and definiteness of that first memory encouraged me. If I could describe it, why not other memories less remote?

So I began the story of my life. I have told it faithfully according to my light, keeping in mind Othello's words: "Nothing extenuate, nor write down aught in malice." I have been helped in my researches by many kind people. I thank them all, and especially those who have allowed me to publish some of their letters to me.

ELLEN TERRY

failure, and when we reached home he put me in the corner to chasten me. "You'll never make an actress!" he said, shaking a reproachful finger at me.

It is *my* mustard-pot, and why Kate should want it, I cant think! She hadnt yellow hair, and she couldnt possibly have behaved so badly. I have often heard my parents say significantly that they had no trouble with *Kate*! Before she was four, she was dancing a hornpipe in a sailor's jumper, a rakish little hat, and a diminutive pair of white ducks! Those ducks, marked "Kate Terry," were kept by mother for years as a precious relic, and are, I hope, still in the family archives!

I stick to the mustard-pot, but I entirely disclaim the little Duke of York in Richard III, which some one with a good memory stoutly insists he saw me play before I made my first appearance as Mamillius. Except for this abortive attempt at Glasgow, I was never on any stage even for a rehearsal until 1856, at the Princess's Theatre, when I appeared with Charles Kean in "A Winter's Tale."

The man with the memory may have seen Kate as one of the Princes in the Tower, but he never saw me with her. Kate was called up to London in 1852 to play Prince Arthur in Charles Kean's production of "King John," and after that she acted in all his plays, until he gave up management in 1859. She had played Arthur during a stock season at Edinburgh, and so well, that some one sang her praises to Kean and advised him to engage her. My mother took Kate to London, and I was left with my father in the provinces for two years. I cant recall much about those two years except sunsets and a great mass of shipping looming up against the sky. The sunsets followed me about everywhere; the shipping was in Liverpool, where father was engaged for a considerable time. He never ceased teaching me to be useful, alert, and quick. Sometimes he hastened my perceptive powers with a slipper, and always he corrected me if I pronounced any word in a slipshod fashion. He himself was a beautiful elocutionist, and if I now speak my language well it is in no small degree due to my early training.

It was to his elocution that father owed his engagement with Macready, of whom he always spoke in terms of the most affectionate admiration in after years, and probably it did him a good turn again with Charles Kean. An actor who had supported Macready with credit was just the actor likely to be useful to a manager who was producing a series of plays by Shakespeare. Kate had been a success at the Princess's, too, in child parts, and this may have reminded Mr Kean to send for Kate's father! At any rate he was sent for towards the end of the year 1853 and left Liverpool for London. I know I cooked his breakfasts for

Such thoughts as these did not trouble my head when I acted with the Keans, but, child as I was, the beauty of the productions at the Princess's Theatre made a great impression on me, and my memory of them is quite clear enough, even if there were not plenty of other evidence, for me to assert that in some respects they were even more elaborate than those of the present day. I know that the buns of one's childhood always seem in memory much bigger and better than the buns sold nowadays, but even allowing for the natural glamour which the years throw over buns and rooms, places and plays alike, I am quite certain that Charles Kean's productions of Shakespeare would astonish the modern critic who regards the period of my first appearance as a sort of dark age in the scenic art of the theatre.

I have alluded to the beauty of Charles Kean's elocution. His voice was also of a wonderful quality—soft and low, yet distinct and clear as a bell. When he played Richard II the magical charm of this organ was alone enough to keep the house spell-bound. His vivid personality made a strong impression on me. Yet others only remember that he called his wife "Delly," though she was Nelly, and always spoke as if he had a cold in his head. How strange! If I did not understand what suggested impressions so different from my own, they would make me more indignant.

Now who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive.
Ten who in ears and eyes
Match me; they all surmise,
They this thing, and I that:
Whom shall my soul believe?

What he owed to Mrs Kean, he would have been the first to confess. In many ways she was the leading spirit in the theatre; at the least, a joint ruler, not a queen-consort. During the rehearsals Mr Kean used to sit in the stalls with a loud-voiced dinner-bell by his side, and when anything went wrong on the stage, he would ring it ferociously, and everything would come to a stop, until Mrs Kean, who always sat on the stage, had set right what was wrong. She was more formidable than beautiful to look at, but her wonderful fire and genius were none the less impressive because she wore a white handkerchief round her head and had a very beaky nose! How I admired and loved and feared her! Later on, the fear was replaced by gratitude, for no woman ever gave herself more trouble to train a young actress than did Mrs Kean. The love and admiration, I am glad to say, remained and grew. It is

used to creep into the greenroom and forget my troubles and my art (if you can talk of art in connection with a child of eight) in a delicious sleep.

At the dress-rehearsals I did not want to sleep. All the members of the company were allowed to sit and watch the scenes in which they were not concerned, from the back of the dress-circle. This, by the way, is an excellent plan, and in theatres where it is followed the young actress has reason to be grateful. In these days of greater publicity when the press attend dress-rehearsals, there may be strong reasons against the company being "in front," but the perfect loyalty of all concerned would dispose of these reasons. Now, for the first time, the beginner is able to see the effect of the weeks of thought and labour which have been given to the production. She can watch from the front the fulfilment of what she has only seen as intention and promise during the other rehearsals. But I am afraid that beginners now are not so keen as they used to be. The first wicked thing I did in a theatre sprang from excess of keenness. I borrowed a knife from a carpenter and made a slit in the canvas to watch Mrs Kean as Hermione!

Devoted to her art, conscientious to a degree in mastering the spirit and details of her part, Mrs Kean also possessed the personality and force to chain the attention and indelibly imprint her rendering of a part on the imagination. When I think of the costume in which she played Hermione, it seems marvellous to me that she could have produced the impression that she did. This seems to contradict what I have said about the magnificence of the production. But not at all! The designs of the dresses were purely classic; but actors and actresses seemed unable to keep their own period and their own individuality out of the clothes directly they got them on their backs. In some cases the original design was quite swamped. No matter what character Mrs Kean was assuming, she always used to wear her hair drawn flat over her forehead and twisted tight round her ears in a kind of circular sweep—such as the old writing-masters used to make when they attempted an extra grand flourish. And then the amount of petticoats she wore! Even as Hermione she was always bunched out by layer upon layer of petticoats, in defiance of the fact that classical parts should not be dressed in a superfluity of raiment. But if the petticoats were full of starch, the voice was full of pathos, and the dignity, simplicity, and womanliness of Mrs Charles Kean's Hermione could not have been marred by a far more grotesque costume.

There is something, I suppose, in a woman's nature which always makes her remember how she was dressed at any specially eventful moment of her life, and I can see myself, as though it were yesterday,

CHAPTER I
A CHILD OF THE STAGE

(1848-1858)

§ 1

THIS is the first thing I remember.

In the corner of a lean-to whitewashed attic stood a fine, plain, solid oak bureau. By climbing up on to this bureau I could see from the window the glories of the sunset. My attic was on a hill in a large and busy town, and the smoke of a thousand chimneys hung like a grey veil between me and the fires in the sky. When the sun had set, and the scarlet and gold, violet and primrose, and all those magic colours that have no names, had faded into the dark, there were other fires for me to see. The flaming forges came out and terrified while they fascinated my childish imagination.

What did it matter to me that I was locked in, and that my father and mother, with my elder sister Kate, were all at the theatre? I had the sunset, the forges, and the oak bureau.

I cannot say how old I was at this time, but I am sure that it wasn't long after my birth (which I cant remember, although I have often been asked to decide in which house at Coventry I was born!). At any rate, I had not then seen a theatre, and I took to the stage before many years had passed over my head.

Putting together what I remember, and such authentic history as there is of my parents' movements, I gather that this attic was in theatrical lodgings in Glasgow. My father was an actor, my mother an actress, and they were at this time on tour in Scotland. Perhaps this is the place to say that father was the son of an Irish builder, and that he eloped in a chaise with mother, who was the daughter of a Scottish minister. I am afraid I know no details of their romance. As for my less immediate ancestry it is "wropt in mystery." Were we all people of the stage? There was a Daniel Terry who was not only a famous actor in his day, but a friend of Sir Walter Scott's. There was an Eliza Terry, an actress, whose portrait appears in *The Dramatic Mirror* in

from my profession was spent in "minding" the younger children—an occupation in which I delighted. They all had very pretty hair, and I used to wash it and comb it out until it looked as fine and bright as floss silk.

It is argued now that stage life is bad for a young child, and children are not allowed by law to appear on the stage until they are ten years old—quite a mature age in my young days! I cannot discuss the whole question here, and must content myself with saying that during my three years at the Princess's I was a very strong, happy, and healthy child. I was never out of the bill except during the run of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," when, through an unfortunate accident, I broke my toe. I was playing Puck, my second part on any stage, and had come up through a trap at the end of the last act to give the final speech. My sister Kate was playing Titania that night as understudy to Carlotta Leclercq. Up I came—but not quite up, for the man shut the trap-door too soon and caught my toe. I screamed. Kate rushed to me and banged her foot on the stage, but the man only closed the trap tighter, mistaking the signal.

"Oh, Katie! Katie!" I cried. "Oh, Nelly! Nelly!" said poor Kate helplessly. Then Mrs Kean came rushing on and made them open the trap and release my poor foot.

"Finish the play, dear," she whispered excitedly, "and I'll double your salary!" There was Kate holding me up on one side and Mrs Kean on the other. Well, I did finish the play in a fashion. The text ran something like this:

If we shadows have offended (Oh, Katie, Katie!)
Think but this, and all is mended, (Oh, my toe!)
That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear. (I cant, I cant!)
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream, (Oh, dear! oh, dear!)
Gentles, do not reprehend; (A big sob)
If you pardon, we will mend. (Oh, Mrs. Kean!)

How I got through it, I dont know! But my salary was doubled—it had been fifteen shillings, and it was raised to thirty—and Mr Skey, of Bartholomew's Hospital, who chanced to be in a stall that very evening, came round behind the scenes and put my toe right. He remained my friend for life.

I was not chosen for Puck because I had played Mamillius with some credit. The same examination was gone through, and again I came out first. During the rehearsals Mrs Kean taught me to draw my breath in through my nose and begin a laugh—a very valuable

there was a fire one night at our lodgings, and she rushed out of the theatre and up the street in an agony of terror. She got us out of the house all right, took us to the theatre, and went on with the next act as if nothing had happened. Such fortitude is commoner in our profession, I think, than in any other. We "go on with the next act" whatever happens, and if we know our business, no one in the audience will ever guess that anything is wrong—that since the curtain last went down some dear friend has died, or our children in the theatrical lodgings up the street have run the risk of being burnt to death.

My mother had eleven children altogether, but only nine survived their infancy, and of these nine, my eldest brother, Ben, and my sister Florence have since died. My sister Kate, who left the stage at an age when most of the young women of the present day take to it for the first time, and made an enduring reputation in a few brilliant years, was the eldest of the family. Then came a sister, who died, and I was the third. After us came Ben, George, Marion, Flossie, Charles, Tom, and Fred. Six out of the nine have been on the stage, but only Marion, Fred, and I are there still.

Two or three members of this large family, at the most, were in existence when I first entered a theatre in a professional capacity, so I will leave them all alone for the present. I had better confess at once that I don't remember this great event, and my sister Kate is unkind enough to say that it never happened—to me! The story, she asserts, was told of her. But without damning proofs she is not going to make me believe it! Shall I be robbed of the only experience of my first eight years of life? Never!

During the rehearsals of a pantomime in a Scottish town (Glasgow, I think: Glasgow has always been an eventful place for me!), a child was wanted for the Spirit of the Mustard-pot. What more natural than that my father should offer my services? I had a shock of pale yellow hair, I was small enough to be put into the property mustard-pot, and the Glasgow stage manager would easily assume that I had inherited talent. My father had acted with Macready in the stock seasons both at Edinburgh and Glasgow, and bore a very high reputation with Scottish audiences. But the stage manager and father alike reckoned without their actress! When they tried to put me into the mustard-pot, I yelled lustily and showed more lung-power than aptitude for the stage.

"Pit your child into the mustard-pot, Mr Terry," said the stage manager.

"Damn you and your mustard-pot, sir!" said my mortified father. "I won't frighten my child for you or any one else!"

But all the same he was bitterly disappointed at my first dramatic

Smith (afterwards Mrs Thorn) was Dragonietta, and one of her speeches ran like this:

"Ungrateful Simple Simon (darting forward) You thought no doubt to spite me!

That to this Royal Christening you did not invite me!

BUT—(Mrs Kean: "*You must plaster that 'but' on the wall at the back of the gallery.*")—

But on this puling brat revenged I'll be!

My fiery dragon there shall have her broiled for teal" (Rolling the "R" in broil *ad lib.*!)

At Ryde during the previous summer my father had taken the theatre, and Kate and I played in several farces which the Keeleys and the great comedian Robson had made famous in London. My performances as Waddilove and Jacob Earwig had provoked some one to describe me as "a perfect little heap of talent!" To fit my Goldenstar, I must alter that phrase and describe myself as a perfect little heap of vanity.

It was that dress! It was a long dress, though I was still a baby, and it was as pink and gold as it was trailing. I used to think I looked *beautiful* in it. I wore a trembling star on my forehead, too, which was enough to upset any girl!

One of the most wearisome, yet essential details of my education is connected with my first long dress. It introduces, too, Mr Oscar Byrn, the dancing-master and director of crowds at the Princess's. One of his lessons was in the art of walking with a flannel blanket pinned on in front and trailing six inches on the floor. My success in carrying out this manœuvre with dignity won high praise from Mr Byrn. The other children used to kick at the blanket and progress in jumps like young kangaroos, but somehow I never had any difficulty in moving gracefully. No wonder then that I impressed Mr Byrn, who had a theory that "an actress was no actress unless she learned to dance early." Whenever he was not actually putting me through my paces, I was busy watching him teach the others. There was the minuet, to which he used to attach great importance, and there was "walking the plank." Up and down one of the long planks, extending the length of the stage, we had to walk, first slowly, and then quicker and quicker until we were able at a considerable pace to walk the whole length of it without deviating an inch from the straight line. This exercise, Mr Byrn used to say, and quite truly, I think, taught us uprightness of carriage and certainty of step.

"Eyes right! Chest out! Chin tucked in!" I can hear the dear old man shouting at us as if it were yesterday; and I have learned to see

failure, and when we reached home he put me in the corner to chasten me. "You'll never make an actress!" he said, shaking a reproachful finger at me.

It is *my* mustard-pot, and why Kate should want it, I cant think! She hadnt yellow hair, and she couldnt possibly have behaved so badly. I have often heard my parents say significantly that they had no trouble with *Kate*! Before she was four, she was dancing a hornpipe in a sailor's jumper, a rakish little hat, and a diminutive pair of white ducks! Those ducks, marked "Kate Terry," were kept by mother for years as a precious relic, and are, I hope, still in the family archives!

I stick to the mustard-pot, but I entirely disclaim the little Duke of York in Richard III, which some one with a good memory stoutly insists he saw me play before I made my first appearance as Mamillius. Except for this abortive attempt at Glasgow, I was never on any stage even for a rehearsal until 1856, at the Princess's Theatre, when I appeared with Charles Kean in "A Winter's Tale."

The man with the memory may have seen Kate as one of the Princes in the Tower, but he never saw me with her. Kate was called up to London in 1852 to play Prince Arthur in Charles Kean's production of "King John," and after that she acted in all his plays, until he gave up management in 1859. She had played Arthur during a stock season at Edinburgh, and so well, that some one sang her praises to Kean and advised him to engage her. My mother took Kate to London, and I was left with my father in the provinces for two years. I cant recall much about those two years except sunsets and a great mass of shipping looming up against the sky. The sunsets followed me about everywhere; the shipping was in Liverpool, where father was engaged for a considerable time. He never ceased teaching me to be useful, alert, and quick. Sometimes he hastened my perceptive powers with a slipper, and always he corrected me if I pronounced any word in a slipshod fashion. He himself was a beautiful elocutionist, and if I now speak my language well it is in no small degree due to my early training.

It was to his elocution that father owed his engagement with Macready, of whom he always spoke in terms of the most affectionate admiration in after years, and probably it did him a good turn again with Charles Kean. An actor who had supported Macready with credit was just the actor likely to be useful to a manager who was producing a series of plays by Shakespeare. Kate had been a success at the Princess's, too, in child parts, and this may have reminded Mr Kean to send for Kate's father! At any rate he was sent for towards the end of the year 1853 and left Liverpool for London. I know I cooked his breakfasts for

him in Liverpool, but I havent the slightest recollection of the next two years in London. As I am determined not to fill up the early blanks with stories of my own invention, I must go straight on to 1856, when rehearsals were called at the Princess's Theatre for Shakespeare's "Winter's Tale."

§ 2

THE Charles Keans, from whom I received my first engagement, were both remarkable people, and at the Princess's Theatre were doing very remarkable work. Kean the younger had not the fire and genius of his wonderful father, Edmund, and but for the inherited splendour of his name it is not likely that he would ever have attained great eminence as an actor. His Wolsey and his Richard (the Second, not the Third) were his best parts, perhaps because in them his beautiful elocution had full scope, and his limitations were not noticeable. But it is more as a stage reformer than as an actor that he will be remembered. The old happy-go-lucky way of staging plays, with its sublime indifference to correctness of detail and its utter disregard of archæology, had received its first blow from Kemble and Macready, but Charles Kean gave it much harder knocks and went further than either of them in the good work.

It is an old story and a true one that when Edmund Kean made his first great success as Shylock, after a long and miserable struggle as a strolling player, he came home to his wife and said: "You shall ride in your own carriage," and then, catching up his little son, added, "and Charley shall go to Eton!" Well, Charley did go to Eton, and if Eton did not make him a great actor, it opened his eyes to the absurd anachronisms in costumes and accessories which prevailed on the stage at that period, and when he undertook the management of the Princess's Theatre, he turned his classical education to account. In addition to scholarly knowledge, he had a naturally refined taste and the power of selecting the right man to help him. Planché, the great authority on historical costume, was one of his ablest coadjutors, and Mr Bradshaw designed all the properties. It has been said lately that I began my career on an unfurnished stage, when the play was the thing, and spectacle was considered of small importance. I take this opportunity of contradicting that statement most emphatically. Neither when I began, nor yet later in my career, have I ever played under a management where infinite pains were not given to every detail. I think that far from hampering the acting, a beautiful and congruous background and harmonious costumes, representing accurately the spirit of the time in which the play is supposed to move, ought to help and inspire the actor.

Such thoughts as these did not trouble my head when I acted with the Keans, but, child as I was, the beauty of the productions at the Princess's Theatre made a great impression on me, and my memory of them is quite clear enough, even if there were not plenty of other evidence, for me to assert that in some respects they were even more elaborate than those of the present day. I know that the buns of one's childhood always seem in memory much bigger and better than the buns sold nowadays, but even allowing for the natural glamour which the years throw over buns and rooms, places and plays alike, I am quite certain that Charles Kean's productions of Shakespeare would astonish the modern critic who regards the period of my first appearance as a sort of dark age in the scenic art of the theatre.

I have alluded to the beauty of Charles Kean's elocution. His voice was also of a wonderful quality—soft and low, yet distinct and clear as a bell. When he played Richard II the magical charm of this organ was alone enough to keep the house spell-bound. His vivid personality made a strong impression on me. Yet others only remember that he called his wife "Delly," though she was Nelly, and always spoke as if he had a cold in his head. How strange! If I did not understand what suggested impressions so different from my own, they would make me more indignant.

Now who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive.
Ten who in ears and eyes
Match me; they all surmise,
They this thing, and I that:
Whom shall my soul believe?

What he owed to Mrs Kean, he would have been the first to confess. In many ways she was the leading spirit in the theatre; at the least, a joint ruler, not a queen-consort. During the rehearsals Mr Kean used to sit in the stalls with a loud-voiced dinner-bell by his side, and when anything went wrong on the stage, he would ring it ferociously, and everything would come to a stop, until Mrs Kean, who always sat on the stage, had set right what was wrong. She was more formidable than beautiful to look at, but her wonderful fire and genius were none the less impressive because she wore a white handkerchief round her head and had a very beaky nose! How I admired and loved and feared her! Later on, the fear was replaced by gratitude, for no woman ever gave herself more trouble to train a young actress than did Mrs Kean. The love and admiration, I am glad to say, remained and grew. It is

Rose, who did great things later on. Men, women and children alike worked hard, and if the language of the actors was more Rabelaisian than polite, they were good fellows, and heart and soul devoted to their profession. Their salaries were smaller and their lives were simpler than those of actors now.

Kate and I had been hard at work for some years, but our parents had no notion of our resting. We were now to show what our training had done for us in "A Drawing-room Entertainment."

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. *Ellen Terry's ancestry.* Ellen Terry's account of her antecedents is sketchy and not quite accurate. Research into the history of her family has proved that her paternal grandfather was not a builder. He has been identified with a Mr H. B. Terry who lived at Portsmouth, and kept an inn, "The Fortunes of War," in Broad Street. I have not been able to find out when his younger son, Benjamin, born in 1818, went on the stage, but it seems likely that it was before he became engaged to Sarah Ballard, "the daughter of a Scottish minister," who like Mr H. B. Terry resided in Portsmouth. The elopement of the young people to which Ellen Terry refers may have been forced on them by a Scottish minister's objections to an actor as a son-in-law. It is not known whether Miss Sarah Ballard's mother was alive when the attractive Ben Terry (described by the actor John Coleman, who met him on the Worcester Circuit soon after his marriage, as "a handsome fine-looking brown-haired man") carried off her daughter, but if she was, there are grounds for thinking she may have been more sympathetic to the romance than her husband. Mrs Ballard was a Miss Copley, a member of the same family which produced John Singleton Copley, the famous American artist (1735-1815). The strong pictorial element in Ellen Terry's art as an actress, and the affinity she felt throughout her life with painters, have always been attributed to her having been thrown with artists in the impressionable days of her youth, but a factor in it may have been the Copley blood in her veins.

Sarah Ballard probably adopted her handsome young husband's profession from necessity, but she had at least one valuable asset to an actress. She was a good-looker. Coleman was struck, when he met the Terrys on the Worcester Circuit, by her wealth of fair hair, her height, her grace, and her beautiful eyes. She acted under the pseudonym "Miss Yerret," her married name spelled backward, with the addition of an absolutely indispensable second "e."

2. *The Terry family.* Ellen Terry's description of the great theatrical family which her father and mother founded should now be brought up to date. In 1932 only two of their children are still alive. Their younger son Fred, after a long and distinguished career as an actor, and actor-manager, now appears rarely on the stage. An elder son Charles, for many years connected with the theatre as a business-manager, has retired. But the Terry family is in no danger of extinction as a theatrical force. The third generation is represented

rare that it falls to the lot of any one to have such an accomplished teacher. Her patience and industry were splendid.

It was Mrs Kean who chose me out of five or six other children to play my first part. We were all tried in it, and when we had finished, she said the same thing to us all: "That's very nice! Thank you, my dear. That will do."

We none of us knew at the time which of us had pleased her most.

At this time we were living in the upper part of a house in the Gower Street region. That first home in London I remember chiefly by its fine brass knocker, which mother kept beautifully bright, and by its being the place to which I was sent my first part! Bound in green American cloth, it looked to me more marvellous than the most priceless book has ever looked since! I was so proud and pleased and delighted that I danced a hornpipe for joy!

Why was I chosen, and not one of the other children, for the part of Mamillius, some one may ask. It was not mere luck, I think. Perhaps I was a born actress, but that would have served me little if I had not been able to *speak*! It must be remembered that both my sister Kate and I had been trained almost from our birth for the stage, and particularly in the important branch of clear articulation. Father, as I have already said, was a very charming elocutionist, and my mother read Shakespeare beautifully. They were both very fond of us and saw our faults with eyes of love, though they were unsparing in their corrections. In those early days they had need of all their patience, for I was a most troublesome, wayward pupil. However, "the labour we delight in physics pain," and I hope, too, that my more staid sister made it up to them!

The rehearsals for "A Winter's Tale" were a lesson in fortitude. They taught me once and for all that an actress's life (even when the actress is only eight) is not all beer and skittles, or cakes and ale, or fame and glory. I was cast for the part of Mamillius in the way I have described, and my heart swelled with pride when I was told what I had to do, when I realised that I had a real Shakespeare part—a possession that father had taught me to consider the pride of life!

But many weary hours were to pass before the first night. If a company has to rehearse four hours a day now, it is considered a great hardship, and players must lunch and dine like other folk. But this was not Kean's way! Rehearsals lasted all day, Sundays included, and when there was no play running at night, until four or five the next morning! I don't think any actor in those days dreamed of luncheon. How my poor little legs used to ache! Sometimes I could hardly keep my eyes open when I was on the stage, and often when my scene was over, I

eightieth birthday, she received a letter from an old admirer recalling an incident at one of these rehearsals. "A score of years ago a friend told me that when he was quite a little boy he used to go with his mother to rehearsals at the Princess's and was present on one occasion when a little girl was rehearsing Mamillius. During an interval he held out to the little girl a packet of sweets, meaning to offer her some. To his surprise, and boyish indignation, she took the lot!"

The story is very characteristic of Ellen Terry. This was not the only time in her life she "took the lot," not from greed, but from absolute confidence that it was expected of her. It never occurred to her to stint a gift when she was the giver. She gave all recklessly, and took for granted that this was natural in every one.

6. *Dragonetta's Speech*. Edith Craig remembers that when she and her brother were children, their mother used to "give them the shivers" by her delivery of this speech of the bad fairy's. "Her 'broiled for tea' was really terrifying."

7. *Edmund Yates*. Mr Yates also "had no idea" that he was in later years to be the instrument of starting a correspondence between that "precocious child," and another child, in 1859 in the cradle, which was to become famous. It was Yates, who in the year 1892, asked Bernard Shaw, then music critic of *The World*, to answer a letter addressed to him by Ellen Terry.

8. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter 1 were: Mamillius ("A Winter's Tale," April 28, 1856); Puck ("A Midsummer Night's Dream," October 15, 1856); William Waddilove ("To Parents and Guardians," September 22, 1857); Jacob Earwig ("Boots at the Swan," September 23, 1857); Fairy Goldenstar ("The White Cat," December 26, 1857); Dragonetta ("The White Cat," January 26, 1858); Karl ("Faust and Marguerite," April 5, 1858); Prince Arthur ("King John," October 18, 1858); Fleance ("Macbeth," November 17, 1858); Genie of the Jewels ("The King of the Castle," December 28, 1858); Tiger Tim ("If the Cap Fits," June 13, 1859).

used to creep into the greenroom and forget my troubles and my art (if you can talk of art in connection with a child of eight) in a delicious sleep.

At the dress-rehearsals I did not want to sleep. All the members of the company were allowed to sit and watch the scenes in which they were not concerned, from the back of the dress-circle. This, by the way, is an excellent plan, and in theatres where it is followed the young actress has reason to be grateful. In these days of greater publicity when the press attend dress-rehearsals, there may be strong reasons against the company being "in front," but the perfect loyalty of all concerned would dispose of these reasons. Now, for the first time, the beginner is able to see the effect of the weeks of thought and labour which have been given to the production. She can watch from the front the fulfilment of what she has only seen as intention and promise during the other rehearsals. But I am afraid that beginners now are not so keen as they used to be. The first wicked thing I did in a theatre sprang from excess of keenness. I borrowed a knife from a carpenter and made a slit in the canvas to watch Mrs Kean as Hermione!

Devoted to her art, conscientious to a degree in mastering the spirit and details of her part, Mrs Kean also possessed the personality and force to chain the attention and indelibly imprint her rendering of a part on the imagination. When I think of the costume in which she played Hermione, it seems marvellous to me that she could have produced the impression that she did. This seems to contradict what I have said about the magnificence of the production. But not at all! The designs of the dresses were purely classic; but actors and actresses seemed unable to keep their own period and their own individuality out of the clothes directly they got them on their backs. In some cases the original design was quite swamped. No matter what character Mrs Kean was assuming, she always used to wear her hair drawn flat over her forehead and twisted tight round her ears in a kind of circular sweep—such as the old writing-masters used to make when they attempted an extra grand flourish. And then the amount of petticoats she wore! Even as Hermione she was always bunched out by layer upon layer of petticoats, in defiance of the fact that classical parts should not be dressed in a superfluity of raiment. But if the petticoats were full of starch, the voice was full of pathos, and the dignity, simplicity, and womanliness of Mrs Charles Kean's Hermione could not have been marred by a far more grotesque costume.

There is something, I suppose, in a woman's nature which always makes her remember how she was dressed at any specially eventful moment of her life, and I can see myself, as though it were yesterday,

that party! I remember that when the great evening came, our hair, which we still wore down our backs, was done to perfection, and we really looked fit to dance with a king. As things were, I *did* dance with the late Duke of Cambridge! It was the most exciting Christmas Day in my life.

Our summer holidays, as I have said, were spent at Ryde. We stayed at Rose Cottage (for which I sought in vain when I revisited the place the other day), and the change was pleasant, even though we were working hard. One of the pieces father gave at the theatre to amuse the summer visitors was a farce called "To Parents and Guardians." I played the fat, naughty boy Waddilove, a part which had been associated with the comedian Robson in London, and I remember that I made the unsophisticated audience shout with laughter by entering with my hands covered with jam! Father was capital as the French usher Tourbillon; and the whole thing went splendidly. Looking back, it seems rather audacious for a mere child to have attempted a grown-up comedian's part, but it was excellent practice for that child! It was the success of these little summer ventures at Ryde which made my father think of our touring in "A Drawing-room Entertainment" when the Keans left the Princess's.

The entertainment consisted of two little plays "Home for the Holidays" and "Distant Relations," and they were written, I think, by a Mr Courtney. We were engaged to do it first at the Royal Colosseum, Regent's Park, by Sir Charles Wyndham's father, Mr Culverwell. Kate and I played all the parts in each piece, and we did quick changes at the side worthy of Fregoli! The whole thing was quite a success, and after playing it at the Colosseum we started on a round of visits.

In "Home for the Holidays," which came first in our little programme, Kate played Letitia Melrose, a young girl of about seventeen, who is expecting her young brother home for the holidays. Letitia, if I remember right, is discovered soliloquising somewhat after this fashion: "Dear little Harry! Left all alone in the world, as we are, I feel such responsibility for him. Shall I find him changed, I wonder, after two years' absence? He has not answered my letters lately. I hope he got the cake and toffee I sent him, but I've not heard a word." At this point I entered as Harry, but instead of being the innocent little schoolboy of Letitia's fond imagination, Harry appears in loud peg-top trousers (peg-top trousers were very fashionable in 1860), with a big cigar in his mouth, and his hat worn jauntily on one side. His talk is all of racing, betting, and fighting. Letty is struck dumb with astonishment at first, but the awful change which two years have effected gradually dawns on her. She implores him to turn from his idle, foolish ways. Master Harry sinks on

from my profession was spent in "minding" the younger children—an occupation in which I delighted. They all had very pretty hair, and I used to wash it and comb it out until it looked as fine and bright as floss silk.

It is argued now that stage life is bad for a young child, and children are not allowed by law to appear on the stage until they are ten years old—quite a mature age in my young days! I cannot discuss the whole question here, and must content myself with saying that during my three years at the Princess's I was a very strong, happy, and healthy child. I was never out of the bill except during the run of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," when, through an unfortunate accident, I broke my toe. I was playing Puck, my second part on any stage, and had come up through a trap at the end of the last act to give the final speech. My sister Kate was playing Titania that night as understudy to Carlotta Leclercq. Up I came—but not quite up, for the man shut the trap-door too soon and caught my toe. I screamed. Kate rushed to me and banged her foot on the stage, but the man only closed the trap tighter, mistaking the signal.

"Oh, Katie! Katie!" I cried. "Oh, Nelly! Nelly!" said poor Kate helplessly. Then Mrs Kean came rushing on and made them open the trap and release my poor foot.

"Finish the play, dear," she whispered excitedly, "and I'll double your salary!" There was Kate holding me up on one side and Mrs Kean on the other. Well, I did finish the play in a fashion. The text ran something like this:

If we shadows have offended (Oh, Katie, Katie!)
Think but this, and all is mended, (Oh, my toe!)
That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear. (I cant, I cant!)
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream, (Oh, dear! oh, dear!)
Gentles, do not reprehend; (A big sob)
If you pardon, we will mend. (Oh, Mrs. Kean!)

How I got through it, I dont know! But my salary was doubled—it had been fifteen shillings, and it was raised to thirty—and Mr Skey, of Bartholomew's Hospital, who chanced to be in a stall that very evening, came round behind the scenes and put my toe right. He remained my friend for life.

I was not chosen for Puck because I had played Mamillius with some credit. The same examination was gone through, and again I came out first. During the rehearsals Mrs Kean taught me to draw my breath in through my nose and begin a laugh—a very valuable

Smith (afterwards Mrs Thorn) was Dragonietta, and one of her speeches ran like this:

"Ungrateful Simple Simon (darting forward) You thought no doubt to spite me!

That to this Royal Christening you did not invite me!

BUT—(Mrs Kean: "*You must plaster that 'but' on the wall at the back of the gallery.*")—

But on this puling brat revenged I'll be!

My fiery dragon there shall have her broiled for teal" (Rolling the "R" in broil *ad lib.*!)

At Ryde during the previous summer my father had taken the theatre, and Kate and I played in several farces which the Keeleys and the great comedian Robson had made famous in London. My performances as Waddilove and Jacob Earwig had provoked some one to describe me as "a perfect little heap of talent!" To fit my Goldenstar, I must alter that phrase and describe myself as a perfect little heap of vanity.

It was that dress! It was a long dress, though I was still a baby, and it was as pink and gold as it was trailing. I used to think I looked *beautiful* in it. I wore a trembling star on my forehead, too, which was enough to upset any girl!

One of the most wearisome, yet essential details of my education is connected with my first long dress. It introduces, too, Mr Oscar Byrn, the dancing-master and director of crowds at the Princess's. One of his lessons was in the art of walking with a flannel blanket pinned on in front and trailing six inches on the floor. My success in carrying out this manœuvre with dignity won high praise from Mr Byrn. The other children used to kick at the blanket and progress in jumps like young kangaroos, but somehow I never had any difficulty in moving gracefully. No wonder then that I impressed Mr Byrn, who had a theory that "an actress was no actress unless she learned to dance early." Whenever he was not actually putting me through my paces, I was busy watching him teach the others. There was the minuet, to which he used to attach great importance, and there was "walking the plank." Up and down one of the long planks, extending the length of the stage, we had to walk, first slowly, and then quicker and quicker until we were able at a considerable pace to walk the whole length of it without deviating an inch from the straight line. This exercise, Mr Byrn used to say, and quite truly, I think, taught us uprightness of carriage and certainty of step.

"Eyes right! Chest out! Chin tucked in!" I can hear the dear old man shouting at us as if it were yesterday; and I have learned to see

tion, and get into a fitting frame of mind for the potion scene. Down in this least imposing of subterranean abodes I used to tremble and thrill with passion and terror. Ah, if only in after years, when I played Juliet at the Lyceum, I could have thrilled an audience to the same extent!

After a few weeks at the Colosseum, we began our little tour. It was a very merry, happy time. We travelled a company of five, although only two of us were acting. There were my father and mother, Kate and myself, and Mr Sydney Naylor, who played the very important part of orchestra. We usually journeyed in a carriage. Once we tramped from Bristol to Exeter. Oh, those delightful journeys on the open road! I tasted the joys of the strolling player's existence, without its miseries. I saw the country for the first time.... When they asked me what I was thinking of as we drove along, I remember answering: "Only that I should like to run wild in a wood for ever!" At night we stayed in beautiful little inns which were ever so much more cheap and comfortable than the hotels of today. In some of the places we were asked out to tea and dinner and very much fêted. An odd little troupe we were! Father was what we will call for courtesy's sake "Stage Manager," but in reality he set the stage himself, and did the work which generally falls to the lot of the stage manager and an army of carpenters combined. My mother used to coach us in our parts, dress us, make us go to sleep part of the day so that we might look fresh at night, and look after us generally. Mr Naylor, who was not very much more than a boy, though to my childish eyes he looked quite venerable, besides discoursing eloquent music in the evenings, during the progress of the "Drawing-room Entertainment," would amuse us—me most especially—by being very entertaining himself during our journeys from place to place. How he made us laugh about—well, mostly about nothing at all.

We travelled in this way for nearly two years, visiting a new place every day, and making, I think, about ten to fifteen pounds a performance. Our little pieces were very pretty, but very slight, too; and I can only suppose that the people thought that "never anything can be amiss when simpleness and duty tender it," for they received our entertainment very well. The time had come when my little brothers had to be sent to school, and our earnings came in useful.

§ 2

WHEN the tour came to an end in 1861, I went to London with my father to find an engagement, while Kate joined the ~~same~~ company at Bristol. We still gave the "Drawing-room Entertainment" at night in the summer, and it still drew large audiences.

of what value all his drilling was, not only to deportment, but to clear utterance. It would not be a bad thing if there were more "old fops" like Oscar Byrn in the theatres of today. That old-fashioned art of "deportment" is sadly neglected.

The pantomime in which I was the fairy Goldenstar was very frequently preceded by "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and the two parts on one night must have been fairly heavy work for a child, but I delighted in it.

In the same year (1858) I played Karl in "Faust and Marguerite," a jolly little part with plenty of points in it, but not nearly as good a part as Puck. Progress on the stage is often crab-like, and little parts, big parts, and no parts at all must be accepted as "all in the day's work." In these days I was cast for many a "dumb" part. I walked on in "The Merchant of Venice" carrying a basket of doves; in "Richard II" I climbed up a pole in the street scene; in "Henry VIII" I was "top angel" in the vision, and I remember that the heat of the gas at that dizzy height made me sick at the dress-rehearsal! I was a little boy "cheering" in several other productions. In "King Lear" my sister Kate played Cordelia. She was only fourteen, and the youngest Cordelia on record. Years after I played it at the Lyceum when I was over forty!

The production of "Henry VIII" at the Princess's was one of Charles Kean's best efforts. I always refrain from belittling the present at the expense of the past, but there were effects here which I have never seen surpassed, and about this my memory is not at all dim. At this time I seem to have been always at the side watching the acting. Mrs Kean's Katharine of Aragon was splendid, and Charles Kean's Wolsey, his best part after, perhaps, his Richard II. Still, the lady who used to stand ready with a tear-bottle to catch his tears as he came off after his last scene rather overdid her admiration. My mental criticism at the time was "What rubbish!" When I say in what parts Charles Kean was "best," I don't mean to be dogmatic. How should a mere child be able to decide? I "think back" and remember in what parts I liked him best, but I may be quite wide of the mark.

In those days audiences liked plenty for their money, and a Shakespeare play was not nearly long enough to fill the bill. English playgoers in the early 'fifties did not emulate the Japanese, who go to the theatre early in the morning and stay there until late at night, still less the Chinese, whose plays begin one week and end the next, but they thought nothing of sitting in the theatre from seven to twelve. In one of the extra pieces which these hours necessitated, I played a "tiger," one of those youthful grooms who are now a bygone fashion. The pride that I had taken in my trembling star in the pantomime was almost equalled

In spite of this, I did not lose my elegant habit for many years! I was only broken of it at last by a friend saying that he supposed I had very ugly hands, as I never showed them! That did it! Out came the hands to prove that they were not so *very* ugly, after all! Vanity often succeeds where remonstrance fails.

The greenroom at the Royalty was a very pretty little place, and Madame Albina sometimes had supper-parties there after the play. One night I could not resist the pangs of curiosity, and I peeped through the keyhole to see what was going on! I chose a lucky moment! One of Madame's admirers was drinking champagne out of her slipper! It was even worth the box on the ear that mother gave me when she caught me. She had been looking all over the theatre for me, to take me home.

My first part at the Royalty was Clementine in "Attar Gull." Of the play, adapted from a story by Eugene Sue, I have a very hazy recollection, but I know that I had one very effective scene in it. Clementine, an ordinary fair-haired ingénue in white muslin, has a great horror of snakes, and, in order to cure her, some one suggests that a dead snake should be put in her room, and she be taught how harmless the thing is for which she has such an aversion. An Indian servant, who, for some reason or other, has a deadly hatred for the whole family, substitutes a live reptile. Clementine appears at the window with the venomous creature coiled round her neck, screaming with terror. The spectators on the stage think that the snake is dead, and that she is only screaming from nerves, but in reality she is being slowly strangled. I began screaming in a frantic, heart-rending manner, and continued screaming, each cry surpassing the last in intensity and agony. At rehearsal I could not get these screams right for a long time. Madame de Rhona grew more and more impatient and at last flew at me like a wild-cat and shook me. I cried, just as I had done when I could not get Prince Arthur's terror right, and then the wild, agonised scream that Madame de Rhona wanted came to me. I *reproduced* it and enlarged it in effect. On the first night the audience applauded the screaming more than anything in the play. Madame de Rhona assured me that I had made a sensation, kissed me and said I was a genius! How sweet and pleasant her flattering words sounded in my young and inexperienced ears I need hardly say.

Looking back at it now, I know perfectly well why I, a mere child of thirteen, was able to give such a realistic display of horror. I had the emotional instinct to start with, no doubt, but if I did it well, it was because I was able to imagine what would be *real* in such a situation. I had never *observed* such horror, but I had previously *realised* it, when, as Arthur, I had imagined the terror of having my eyes put out.

Imagination! imagination! I put it first years ago, when I was asked

"Hubert! Arthur!" Mr Kean began the next scene, but it was of no use. He had to give in and send for us. Meanwhile old Ryder had been striding up and down the greenroom in a perfect fury. "Never mind, ducky!" he kept on saying to me; and it was really quite unnecessary, for "ducky" was just enjoying the noise and thinking it all capital fun. "Never mind! When other people are rotting in their graves, ducky, you'll be up there!" (With a terrific gesture indicative of the dizzy heights of fame.) When the message came to the greenroom that we were to take the call, he strode across the stage to the entrance, I running after him and quite unable to keep up with his long steps.

In "Macbeth" I was again associated with Mr Ryder, who was the Banquo when I was Fleance. I remember that after we had been dismissed by Macbeth: "Good repose the while," we had to go off up a flight of steps. I always stayed at the top till the end of the scene, but Mr Ryder used to go down the other side rather heavily, and Mr Kean, who wanted perfect quiet for the dagger speech, had to keep on saying: "Ssh! ssh!" all through it.

"Those carpenters at the side are enough to ruin any acting," he said one night when he came off.

"I'm a heavy man, and I cant help it," said Ryder.

"Oh, I didn't know it was *you*," said Mr Kean—but I think he did! One night I was the innocent cause of a far worse disturbance. I dozed at the top of the steps and rolled from the top to the bottom with a fearful crash! Another night during a performance of "King John" I got into trouble for not catching Mrs Kean when, as Constance, she sank down on to the ground.

"Here is my throne: bid kings come bow to it!"

I was, for my sins, looking at the audience, and Mrs Kean went down with a *run*, and was naturally very angry with me!

In 1860 the Keans gave up the management of the Princess's Theatre and went to America. They travelled in a sailing vessel, and, being delayed by a calm, had to drink water caught in the sails, the water supply having given out. I believe that although the receipts were wonderful, Charles Kean spent much more than he made during his ten years of management. Indeed, he confessed as much in a public announcement. The Princess's Theatre was not very big, and the seats were low-priced. It is my opinion, however, that no manager with high artistic aims, resolute to carry them out in his own way, can ever make a fortune.

Of the other members of the company during my three years at the Princess's, I remember best Walter Lacy, who was the William Terriss of the time. He knew Madame Vestris, and had many entertaining stories about her. Then there were the Leclercqs, two clever sisters, Carlotta and

my engagement came to an end, and I went to Bristol, where I gained the experience of my life with a stock company.

§ 3

"I THINK anything, naturally written, ought to be in everybody's way that pretends to be an actor." This remark of Colley Cibber's long ago struck me as an excellent motto for a beginner on the stage. The ambitious boy thinks of Hamlet, the ambitious girl of Juliet, but where shall we find the young actor and actress whose heart is set on being useful?

Usefulness! It is not a fascinating word, and the quality is not one of which the aspiring spirit can dream o' nights, yet on the stage it is the first thing to aim at. Not until we have learned to be useful can we afford to do what we like. The tragedian will always be a limited tragedian if he has not learned how to laugh. The comedian who cannot weep will never touch the highest levels of mirth.

It was in the stock companies that we learned the great lesson of usefulness; we played everything—tragedy, comedy, farce, and burlesque. There was no question of parts "suing" us; we had to take what we were given.

The first time I was cast for a part in a burlesque I told the stage manager I couldnt sing and I couldnt dance. His reply was short and to the point. "You've got to." And so I sang and danced in a way—a very funny way at first, no doubt. It was admirable training, for it took all the self-consciousness out of me to start with. To end with, I thought it capital fun, and enjoyed burlesque as much as Shakespeare.

What was a stock company? I forget that in these days the question may be asked in all good faith, and that it is necessary to answer it. Well, then, a stock company was a company of actors and actresses brought together by the manager of a provincial theatre to support a leading actor or actress—"a star"—from London. When Edmund Kean, the Kembles, Macready, or Mrs Siddons visited provincial towns, these companies were ready to support them in Shakespeare. They were also ready to play burlesque, farce, and comedy to fill out the bill. Sometimes the "stars" would come for a whole season; if their magnitude were of the first order, for only one night. Sometimes they would rehearse with the stock company, sometimes they wouldnt. There is a story of a manager visiting Edmund Kean at his hotel on his arrival in a small provincial town, and asking the great actor when he would rehearse.

"Rehearse! I'm not going to rehearse. I'm going to sleep!"

"Have you any instructions?"

Rose, who did great things later on. Men, women and children alike worked hard, and if the language of the actors was more Rabelaisian than polite, they were good fellows, and heart and soul devoted to their profession. Their salaries were smaller and their lives were simpler than those of actors now.

Kate and I had been hard at work for some years, but our parents had no notion of our resting. We were now to show what our training had done for us in "A Drawing-room Entertainment."

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. *Ellen Terry's ancestry.* Ellen Terry's account of her antecedents is sketchy and not quite accurate. Research into the history of her family has proved that her paternal grandfather was not a builder. He has been identified with a Mr H. B. Terry who lived at Portsmouth, and kept an inn, "The Fortunes of War," in Broad Street. I have not been able to find out when his younger son, Benjamin, born in 1818, went on the stage, but it seems likely that it was before he became engaged to Sarah Ballard, "the daughter of a Scottish minister," who like Mr H. B. Terry resided in Portsmouth. The elopement of the young people to which Ellen Terry refers may have been forced on them by a Scottish minister's objections to an actor as a son-in-law. It is not known whether Miss Sarah Ballard's mother was alive when the attractive Ben Terry (described by the actor John Coleman, who met him on the Worcester Circuit soon after his marriage, as "a handsome fine-looking brown-haired man") carried off her daughter, but if she was, there are grounds for thinking she may have been more sympathetic to the romance than her husband. Mrs Ballard was a Miss Copley, a member of the same family which produced John Singleton Copley, the famous American artist (1735-1815). The strong pictorial element in Ellen Terry's art as an actress, and the affinity she felt throughout her life with painters, have always been attributed to her having been thrown with artists in the impressionable days of her youth, but a factor in it may have been the Copley blood in her veins.

Sarah Ballard probably adopted her handsome young husband's profession from necessity, but she had at least one valuable asset to an actress. She was a good-looker. Coleman was struck, when he met the Terrys on the Worcester Circuit, by her wealth of fair hair, her height, her grace, and her beautiful eyes. She acted under the pseudonym "Miss Yerret," her married name spelled backward, with the addition of an absolutely indispensable second "e."

2. *The Terry family.* Ellen Terry's description of the great theatrical family which her father and mother founded should now be brought up to date. In 1932 only two of their children are still alive. Their younger son Fred, after a long and distinguished career as an actor, and actor-manager, now appears rarely on the stage. An elder son Charles, for many years connected with the theatre as a business-manager, has retired. But the Terry family is in no danger of extinction as a theatrical force. The third generation is represented

with them and sold them tickets. My mother was most vigilant in her rôle of duenna, and from the time I first went on the stage until I was a grown woman I can never remember going home unaccompanied by either her or my father.

The leading male members of Mr Chute's stock company were Arthur Wood (an admirable comedian), William George Rignold, W. H. Vernon, and Charles Coghlan. At this time Charles Coghlan was acting magnificently, and dressing each of his characters so correctly and so perfectly that most of the audience did not understand it. For instance, as Glavis, in "The Lady of Lyons," he looked a picture of the Directoire fop. He did not compromise in any single detail, but wore the long straggling hair, the high cravat, the eye-glass, bows, jags, and tags, to the infinite amusement of some members of the audience, who could not imagine what his quaint dress meant. Coghlan's clothes were not more perfect than his manner, but both were a little in advance of the appreciation of Bristol playgoers in the 'sixties.

At the Princess's Theatre I had gained my experience of long rehearsals. When I arrived in Bristol I was to learn the value of short ones. Mr Chute took me in hand, and I had to wake up and be alert with brains and body. The first part I played was Cupid in "Endymion." To this day I can remember my lines. I entered as a blind old woman in what is known in theatrical jargon as a "disguise cloak."

Pity the poor blind—what, no one here?
Nay then, I'm not so blind as I appear,
And so to throw off all disguise and sham,
Let me at once inform you who I am! (throwing off cloak)
I'm Cupid!

Henrietta Hodson as Endymion and Kate as Diana had a dance with me which used to bring down the house. I wore a short tunic which in those days was considered too scanty to be "quite nice," and carried the conventional bow and quiver.

In another burlesque, "Perseus and Andromeda," I played Dictys; it was in this piece that Arthur Wood used to make people laugh by punning on the line: "Such a mystery (Miss Terry) here!" It was an absurd little joke, but the people used to cheer and applaud.

§ 4

WHILE my stage education was progressing apace, I was, through the influence of a very wonderful family whose acquaintance we made, having my eyes opened to beautiful things in art and literature. Mr Godwin,

on the stage by Kate Terry's daughter, Mabel Terry-Lewis; Charles Terry's children, Béatrice and Minnie; Fred Terry's children, Dennis and Phyllis Neilson-Terry;¹ the fourth by Kate Terry's grandson, John Gielgud, a brilliant young actor who is already in the front rank of his profession. His performances in Shakespeare at the Old Vic Theatre in 1929 and 1930 maintained the reputation of the Terry family for speaking the language of dramatic poetry as if it were their native tongue. This generation is further represented by June Morris and Anthony Hawtrey, grandchildren of Florence Terry, who have adopted the stage as a profession. There is even a member of the fifth generation being trained for it. Robinetta Craig, the grand-daughter of Gordon Craig, and great-grand-daughter of Ellen Terry, may one day keep the torch of the family talent alight, and hand it on to another generation yet unborn.

Ellen Terry's children, who in youth showed a natural aptitude for acting, were on the stage for several years. Gordon Craig promised to become a really great actor, but having discovered at the age of twenty-five that he "was not a second Irving" (his own phrase) he seems to have been discouraged. He left the stage in 1897 and has never acted since. But his determination to "be somebody, and do something" has, owing to the great variety of his talents, borne fruit. He is more famous today than perhaps he would have been if he had devoted himself with the single-heartedness of his master, Irving, to the actor's calling. This is not the place to discuss his position in the world of the theatre. It must suffice to say that he has been a great figure in it for the last thirty years.

Edith Craig may pride herself on having been a *useful* actress in the Lyceum company. Henry Irving early discovered her usefulness, and gave her a series of small but important parts in which he could count on her serving him as an actor with unobtrusive skill and reliability. It is with these qualities that Edith Craig, since she left the stage, has continued to serve the theatre in many different branches. Perhaps no member of the Terry family has worked harder in its service with less reward.

3. *Ellen Terry's First Appearance.* On June 16, 1856, Mr Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) visited the Princess's Theatre. The author of "Alice in Wonderland" had only a month earlier adopted the famous pseudonym chosen, from four names he submitted, by Edmund Yates, the editor of *The Train*, to which Mr Dodgson contributed humorous lyrics. Writing in his diary of the visit to the Princess's, Lewis Carroll says that he "especially admired the acting of the little Mamillius, Ellen Terry, a beautiful little creature, who played with remarkable ease and spirit."

4. *Children on the Stage.* Ellen Terry's statement that children are not allowed by law to appear on the stage until they are ten years old was true in 1906, but now has to be revised. Without a licence, they may not appear until the age of fourteen, nor with one, until the age of twelve.

5. *Rehearsals at the Princess's.* In the year 1928, shortly before Ellen Terry's

¹ Since this note was written Dennis Neilson-Terry has died. He succumbed to double pneumonia in July 1932 while on tour in South Africa. At the early age of 37 his distinguished career as an actor and actor-manager came to a tragically sudden end.

fulfill an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre, of which Mr Buckstone was still the manager and Sothern the great attraction. I had played Gertrude Howard in "The Little Treasure" during the stock season at Bristol, and when Mr Buckstone wanted to revive the piece at the Haymarket, he was told about me. I was fifteen at this time, and my sense of humour was as yet ill-developed. I was fond of "larking" and merry enough, but I hated being laughed at! At any rate, I could see no humour in Mr Sothern's jokes at my expense. He played my lover in "The Little Treasure," and he was always teasing me—pulling my hair, making me forget my part and look like an idiot. But for dear old Mr Howe, who was my "father" in the same piece, I should not have enjoyed acting in it at all, but he made amends for everything. We had a scene together in which he used to cry, and I used to cry—oh, it was lovely!

Why I should never have liked Sothern, with his wonderful hands and blue eyes, Sothern, whom every one found so fascinating and delightful, I cannot say, and I record it as discreditable to me, not to him. I admired him—I could not help doing that—but I dreaded his jokes, and thought some of them very cruel.

Another thing I thought cruel at this time was the scandal which was talked in the theatre. A change for the better has taken place in this respect—at any rate, in conduct. People behave better now, and in our profession, carried on as it is in the public eye, behaviour is everything. At the Haymarket there were simply no bounds to what was said in the greenroom. One night I remember gathering up my skirts (we were, I think, playing "The Rivals" at the time), making a curtsy, as Mr Chippendale, one of the best actors in old comedy I ever knew, had taught me, and sweeping out of the room with the famous line from another Sheridan play: "Ladies and gentlemen, I leave my character behind me!"

I see now that was very priggish of me, but I am quite as unpromising in my hatred of scandal now as I was then. Quite recently I had a line to say in "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," which is a very helpful reply to any tale-bearing. "As if any one ever knew the whole truth about anything!" That is just the point. It is only the whole truth which is informing and fair in the long run, and the whole truth is never known.

I regard my engagement at the Haymarket as one of my lost opportunities, which in after years I would have given much to have had over again. I might have learned so much more than I did. I was preoccupied by events outside the theatre. Tom Taylor, who had for some time been a good friend to both Kate and me, had introduced us to Mr Watts, the great painter, and to me the stage seemed a poor place when compared with the wonderful studio where Kate and I were painted as "The Sis-

eightieth birthday, she received a letter from an old admirer recalling an incident at one of these rehearsals. "A score of years ago a friend told me that when he was quite a little boy he used to go with his mother to rehearsals at the Princess's and was present on one occasion when a little girl was rehearsing Mamillius. During an interval he held out to the little girl a packet of sweets, meaning to offer her some. To his surprise, and boyish indignation, she took the lot!"

The story is very characteristic of Ellen Terry. This was not the only time in her life she "took the lot," not from greed, but from absolute confidence that it was expected of her. It never occurred to her to stint a gift when she was the giver. She gave all recklessly, and took for granted that this was natural in every one.

6. *Dragonetta's Speech*. Edith Craig remembers that when she and her brother were children, their mother used to "give them the shivers" by her delivery of this speech of the bad fairy's. "Her 'broiled for tea' was really terrifying."

7. *Edmund Yates*. Mr Yates also "had no idea" that he was in later years to be the instrument of starting a correspondence between that "precocious child," and another child, in 1859 in the cradle, which was to become famous. It was Yates, who in the year 1892, asked Bernard Shaw, then music critic of *The World*, to answer a letter addressed to him by Ellen Terry.

8. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter 1 were: Mamillius ("A Winter's Tale," April 28, 1856); Puck ("A Midsummer Night's Dream," October 15, 1856); William Waddilove ("To Parents and Guardians," September 22, 1857); Jacob Earwig ("Boots at the Swan," September 23, 1857); Fairy Goldenstar ("The White Cat," December 26, 1857); Dragonetta ("The White Cat," January 26, 1858); Karl ("Faust and Marguerite," April 5, 1858); Prince Arthur ("King John," October 18, 1858); Fleance ("Macbeth," November 17, 1858); Genie of the Jewels ("The King of the Castle," December 28, 1858); Tiger Tim ("If the Cap Fits," June 13, 1859).

speaking the "tag." Now, it has been a superstition among actors for centuries that it is unlucky to speak the "tag" in full at rehearsal. So during the rehearsals of "The Rivals," I followed precedent and did not say the last two or three words of my part and of the play, but just "mum, mum, mum!" When the first night came, instead of dropping my voice with the last word in the conventional and proper manner, I ended with an upward inflection, which was right for the sense, but wrong for the curtain.

This unexpected innovation produced utter consternation all round me. The prompter was so much astounded that he thought there was something more coming and did not give the "pull" for the curtain to come down. There was a horrid pause while it remained up, and then Mr Buckstone, the Bob Acres of the cast, who was very deaf and had not heard the upward inflection, exclaimed loudly and irritably: "Eh! eh! What does this mean? Why the devil don't you bring down the curtain?" And he went on cursing until it did come down. This experience made me think more than ever of the advice of an old actor: "Never leave your stage effects to *chance*, my child, but *rehearse*, and find out all about it!"

How I wished I had rehearsed that "tag" and taken the risk of being unlucky!

For the credit of my intelligence I should add that the mistake was a technical one, not a stupid one. The line was a question. It *demand*ed an upward inflection; but no play can end like that.

It was not all old comedy at the Haymarket. "Much Ado About Nothing" was put on during my engagement, and I played Hero to Miss Louisa Angell's Beatrice. Miss Angell was a very modern Beatrice, but I, though I say it "as shouldnt," played Hero beautifully! I remember wondering if I should ever play Beatrice. I just *wondered*, that was all. It was the same when Miss Angell played Letitia Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem," and I was Lady Touchwood. I just wondered! I never felt jealous of other people having bigger parts; I never looked forward consciously to a day when I should have them myself. There was no virtue in it. It was just because I wasnt ambitious.

Louise Keeley, a pretty little woman and clever, took my fancy more than any one else in the company. She was always merry and kind, and I admired her dainty, vivacious acting. In a burlesque called "Buckstone at Home" (in which I played Britannia and came up a trap in a huge pearl, which opened and disclosed me) Miss Keeley was delightful. One evening the Prince and Princess of Wales (now our King and Queen)¹ came to see "Buckstone at Home." I believe it was the very first time they had appeared at a theatre since their marriage. They sat far back

¹ Edward VII and Queen Alexandra.

CHAPTER II
GROWING UP
(1859-1866)

§ I

FROM July to September every year the leading theatres in London and the provincial cities were closed for the summer vacation. This plan is still adhered to more or less, but in London, at any rate, some theatres keep their doors open all the year round. During these two months most actors take their holiday, but when we were with the Keans we were not in a position to afford such a luxury. Kate and I were earning good salaries for our age,¹ but the family at home was increasing in size, and my mother was careful not to let us think that there never could be any rainy days. I am bound to say that I left questions of thrift, and what we could afford and what we couldnt entirely to my parents. I received sixpence a week pocket-money, with which I was more than content for many years. Poor we may have been at this time, but, owing to my mother's diligent care and cleverness, we always looked nice and neat. One of the few early dissipations I can remember was a Christmas party in Half Moon Street, where our white muslin dresses were equal to any present. But more love and toil and pride than money had gone to make them. I have a very clear vision of coming home late from the theatre to our home in Stanhope Street, Regent's Park, and seeing my dear mother stitching at those pretty frocks by the light of one candle. It was no uncommon thing to find her sewing at that time, but if she was tired, she never showed it. She was always bright and tender. With the callousness of childhood, I scarcely realised the devotion and ceaseless care that she bestowed on us, and her untiring efforts to bring us up as beautifully as she could. The knowledge came to me later on when, all too early in my life, my own responsibilities came on me and quickened my perceptions. But I was a heartless little thing when I danced off to

¹ Of course, all salaries are bigger now than they were in my youth. The "stars" in old days earned large sums—Edmund Kean received two hundred and fifty pounds for four performances—but the ordinary members of a company were paid at a very modest rate.

and a quilted white bonnet with a sprig of orange-blossom, and I was wrapped in a beautiful Indian shawl. I "went away" in a sealskin jacket with coral buttons, and a little sealskin cap. I cried a great deal, and Mr Watts said, "Dont cry. It makes your nose swell." The day I left home to be married. I "tubbed" all my little brothers and sisters and washed their fair hair.

Little Holland House, where Mr Watts lived, seemed to me a paradise, where only beautiful things were allowed to come. All the women were graceful, and all the men were gifted. A trio of sisters—Mrs Prinsep—(mother of the painter), Lady Somers, and Mrs Cameron, a pioneer in artistic photography—were known as Beauty, Dash, and Talent. There were two more beautiful sisters, Mrs Jackson and Mrs Dalrymple. Gladstone, Disraeli and Browning were among Mr Watt's visitors. At Freshwater, where I went on a visit soon after my marriage, I first saw Tennyson.

As I write down these great names, I feel apprehensive of rousing expectations in the reader which I shall be unable to satisfy. For my recollections of the men to whom the names belong are very incomplete. I remember thinking that Mr Gladstone was like a volcano at rest; his face was pale and calm, but the calm was the calm of the grey crust of Etna. You looked into the piercing dark eyes and caught a glimpse of the red-hot crater beneath the crust. Years later when I met him at the Lyceum, I had exactly the same impression. Then I became better acquainted with him, and discovered that he was one of the best "audiences" actor or actress could desire. He used often to come to the Lyceum and watch the play from a little seat in the O. P. corner. Henry Irving covered the seat with red baize and hung up curtains so that our great visitor should be protected from draughts. It was not only on account of his deafness that Mr Gladstone preferred this corner close to the actors to a stall or box. He could come and go without attracting attention. But he seldom took advantage of this, nearly always arriving five minutes before the curtain went up, and staying until the end of the play. One bitter winter night I feared he would catch cold, and I lent him a white scarf which he wore with great dignity.

He could always give his whole mind to the thing which claimed his interest at the moment. This made him one of the most comfortable people to talk to that I have ever met. In everything he was thorough. Would that all playgoers were as punctual and as capable of such concentration!

I remember contrasting his punctuality when he came to see "King Lear" with the unpunctuality of another statesman, Lord Randolph Churchill, who came to see the same play the following evening.

that party! I remember that when the great evening came, our hair, which we still wore down our backs, was done to perfection, and we really looked fit to dance with a king. As things were, I *did* dance with the late Duke of Cambridge! It was the most exciting Christmas Day in my life.

Our summer holidays, as I have said, were spent at Ryde. We stayed at Rose Cottage (for which I sought in vain when I revisited the place the other day), and the change was pleasant, even though we were working hard. One of the pieces father gave at the theatre to amuse the summer visitors was a farce called "To Parents and Guardians." I played the fat, naughty boy Waddilove, a part which had been associated with the comedian Robson in London, and I remember that I made the unsophisticated audience shout with laughter by entering with my hands covered with jam! Father was capital as the French usher Tourbillon; and the whole thing went splendidly. Looking back, it seems rather audacious for a mere child to have attempted a grown-up comedian's part, but it was excellent practice for that child! It was the success of these little summer ventures at Ryde which made my father think of our touring in "A Drawing-room Entertainment" when the Keans left the Princess's.

The entertainment consisted of two little plays "Home for the Holidays" and "Distant Relations," and they were written, I think, by a Mr Courtney. We were engaged to do it first at the Royal Colosseum, Regent's Park, by Sir Charles Wyndham's father, Mr Culverwell. Kate and I played all the parts in each piece, and we did quick changes at the side worthy of Fregoli! The whole thing was quite a success, and after playing it at the Colosseum we started on a round of visits.

In "Home for the Holidays," which came first in our little programme, Kate played Letitia Melrose, a young girl of about seventeen, who is expecting her young brother home for the holidays. Letitia, if I remember right, is discovered soliloquising somewhat after this fashion: "Dear little Harry! Left all alone in the world, as we are, I feel such responsibility for him. Shall I find him changed, I wonder, after two years' absence? He has not answered my letters lately. I hope he got the cake and toffee I sent him, but I've not heard a word." At this point I entered as Harry, but instead of being the innocent little schoolboy of Letitia's fond imagination, Harry appears in loud peg-top trousers (peg-top trousers were very fashionable in 1860), with a big cigar in his mouth, and his hat worn jauntily on one side. His talk is all of racing, betting, and fighting. Letty is struck dumb with astonishment at first, but the awful change which two years have effected gradually dawns on her. She implores him to turn from his idle, foolish ways. Master Harry sinks on

and Knights of the Round Table with Tennyson's sons, Hallam and Lionel, and the young Camerons, to sitting indoors noticing what the poet did and said. I was mighty proud when I learned how to prepare his daily pipe for him. It was a long church-warden, and he liked the stem to be steeped in a solution of sal volatile, or something of that kind, so that it did not stick to his lips. But he and all the others seemed to me very old. There were my young knights waiting for me; and jumping gates, climbing trees, and running paper-chases are pleasant when one is young.

It was not to inattentive ears that Tennyson read his poems. His reading was most impressive, but I think he read Browning's "Ride from Ghent to Aix" better than anything of his own, except, perhaps, "The Northern Farmer." He used to preserve the monotonous rhythm of the galloping horses in Browning's poem, and made the words come out sharply like hoofs upon a road. It was a little comic until one got used to it, but that fault lay in the ear of the hearer. It was the right way and the fine way to read this particular poem, and I have never forgotten it.

In after years I met Tennyson again, when with Henry Irving I acted in two of his plays at the Lyceum. When I come to those plays, I shall have more to say of him. Browning too I met in later years, but only at dinner-parties. I knew him no better than in this early period, when I was Nelly Watts, and heedless of the greatness of great men, "To meet an angel and not be afraid is to be impudent." I don't like to confess to it, but I think I must have been, according to this definition, *very* impudent!

One charming domestic arrangement at Freshwater was the serving of the dessert in a separate room from the rest of the dinner. And such a dessert it always was! Fruit piled high on great dishes in Veronese fashion, not the few nuts and an orange of some English households.

It must have been some years after the Freshwater days, yet before the production of "The Cup," that I saw Tennyson in his carriage outside a jeweller's shop in Bond Street.

"How very nice you look in the daytime," he remarked. "Not like an actress!"

I disclaimed my singularity, and said I thought actresses looked *very* nice in the daytime.

To him and to the others my early romance was always the most interesting thing about me. When I saw them in later times, it seemed as if months, not years, had passed since I was Nelly Watts.

Once, at the dictates of a conscience, perhaps an over-scrupulous conscience, I made a bonfire of my letters. But a few were saved from the burning, more by accident than design. Among them I found yesterday

his knees by her side, but just as his sister is about to rejoice and kiss him, he looks up in her face and bursts into loud laughter. She is exasperated, and, threatening to send some one to him who will talk to him in a very different fashion, she leaves the stage. Master Hopeful thereupon dons his dressing-gown and smoking cap, and, lying full length upon the sofa, begins to have a quiet smoke. He is interrupted by the appearance of a most wonderful and grim old woman in blue spectacles—Miss Terrorbody. This is no other than Sister Letty, dressed up in order to frighten the youth out of his wits. She talks and talks, and, after painting vivid pictures of what will become of him unless he alters his "vile ways," leaves him, but not before she has succeeded in making him shed tears, half of fright and half of anger. Later on, Sister Letty, looking from the window, sees a grand fight going on between Master Harry and a butcher-boy, and then Harry enters with his coat off, his sleeves tucked up, explaining in a state of blazing excitement that he "*had* to fight that butcher-boy, because he had struck a little girl in the street." Letty sees that the lad has a fine nature in spite of his folly, and appeals to his better feelings, this time not in vain.

"Distant Relations" was far more inconsequent, but it served to show our versatility, at any rate. I was all things by turns, and nothing long! First I was the page boy who admitted the "relations" (Kate in many guises). Then I was a relation myself—Giles, a rustic. As Giles, I suddenly asked if the audience would like to hear me play the drum, and "obliged" with a drum solo, in which I had spent a great deal of time perfecting myself. Long before this I remember dimly some rehearsal when I was put in the orchestra and taken care of by "the gentleman who played the drum," and how badly I wanted to play it too! I afterwards took lessons from Mr Woodhouse, the drummer at the Princess's.

Both Kate and I, even at this early age, had dreams of playing all Mrs Kean's parts. We knew the words, not only of them, but of every female part in every play in which we had appeared at the Princess's. "Walking on is so dull," the young actress says sometimes to me now, and I ask her if she knows all the parts of the play in which she is "walking on." I hardly ever find that she does. "I have no understudy," is her excuse. Even if a young woman has not been given an understudy, she ought, if she has any intention of taking her profession as an actress seriously, to constitute herself an understudy to every part in the piece! Then she would not find her time as a "super" hang heavy on her hands.

Some of my readers may be able to remember the Stalactite Caverns which used to be one of the attractions at the Colosseum. It was there that I first studied the words of Juliet. To me the gloomy horror of the place was a perfect godsend! Here I could cultivate a creepy, eerie sensa-

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during the tours of the Drawing-Room Entertainment, Ellen Terry does not mention that she played parts in some of the little pieces in the programme.

6. *Those large hands.* It may well astonish readers who are old enough to remember Ellen Terry that she should ever have been ashamed of her hands. But perhaps they were not so beautiful in youth before she had learned how to use them. Apropos of this speculation, I quote Bernard Shaw's opinion that "Ellen Terry actually invented her own beauty. Her portraits as a girl have hardly anything in them of the wonderful woman who, after leaving the stage for seven years, re-appeared in 1875 and took London by storm."

7. *Mr Godwin.* The first allusion in Ellen Terry's autobiography to "Mr Godwin" (Edward William Godwin, F.S.A.) calls for amplification. It is strange that there is no biography of this brilliant man, who besides being an architect of distinction in the British school which broke away from the pseudo-classic style of the early 19th century period, was a learned archæologist, a pioneer in the reform of domestic furniture and decoration, and the initiator of an æsthetic movement in the theatre which was destined to have a lasting influence. One of the greatest services rendered by Gordon Craig's organ *The Mask*, a journal devoted to the art of the theatre, now deceased, was the reprint in 1908 of Godwin's valuable series of articles on "The Architecture and Costumes of Shakespeare's Plays" which originally appeared in "The Architect" in 1875. The time has come to reprint them once more for the instruction of a generation entirely ignorant of the debt the theatre owes to Godwin.

His career can be only briefly summarised here. Born in Bristol in 1833, he was little more than a boy when he won the three premiums in the competitions for designs for the assize-courts in his native town. At the age of twenty-five he built the Town Hall at Northampton. Another important architectural achievement is the Town Hall at Congleton. Of the many houses Godwin built, the White House in Chelsea, designed for his friend Whistler, is best known. In lending his talents to the service of the theatre Godwin had precursors in the great architects, Serlio, Palladio and Inigo Jones. His wide learning and keen perception of beauty made him dissatisfied both with the archæological and æsthetic standards of production in the theatre of his youth. He expressed some of this dissatisfaction in the criticisms of the productions at Bristol to which Ellen Terry refers.

After Godwin left Bristol for London he continued to practise his profession as architect, but from the year 1875 when he supervised the Bancrofts' production of "The Merchant of Venice" (in which Ellen Terry played Portia) his work for the theatre engrossed him. Its extent is not to be measured by the actual number of productions in which he collaborated. He prepared scene and costume designs for many other plays, and was a prolific writer of articles on his special subject, archæology in relation to the theatre. His most notable achievement was the production of "Helena in Troas" at Hengler's Circus in 1886. He designed and built a theatre on the Greek model within the existing structure, and applied his detailed knowledge of the past to the reconstruction of a Greek performance. A contemporary picture of this production, in which

tion, and get into a fitting frame of mind for the potion scene. Down in this least imposing of subterranean abodes I used to tremble and thrill with passion and terror. Ah, if only in after years, when I played Juliet at the Lyceum, I could have thrilled an audience to the same extent!

After a few weeks at the Colosseum, we began our little tour. It was a very merry, happy time. We travelled a company of five, although only two of us were acting. There were my father and mother, Kate and myself, and Mr Sydney Naylor, who played the very important part of orchestra. We usually journeyed in a carriage. Once we tramped from Bristol to Exeter. Oh, those delightful journeys on the open road! I tasted the joys of the strolling player's existence, without its miseries. I saw the country for the first time.... When they asked me what I was thinking of as we drove along, I remember answering: "Only that I should like to run wild in a wood for ever!" At night we stayed in beautiful little inns which were ever so much more cheap and comfortable than the hotels of today. In some of the places we were asked out to tea and dinner and very much fêted. An odd little troupe we were! Father was what we will call for courtesy's sake "Stage Manager," but in reality he set the stage himself, and did the work which generally falls to the lot of the stage manager and an army of carpenters combined. My mother used to coach us in our parts, dress us, make us go to sleep part of the day so that we might look fresh at night, and look after us generally. Mr Naylor, who was not very much more than a boy, though to my childish eyes he looked quite venerable, besides discoursing eloquent music in the evenings, during the progress of the "Drawing-room Entertainment," would amuse us—me most especially—by being very entertaining himself during our journeys from place to place. How he made us laugh about—well, mostly about nothing at all.

We travelled in this way for nearly two years, visiting a new place every day, and making, I think, about ten to fifteen pounds a performance. Our little pieces were very pretty, but very slight, too; and I can only suppose that the people thought that "never anything can be amiss when simpleness and duty tender it," for they received our entertainment very well. The time had come when my little brothers had to be sent to school, and our earnings came in useful.

§ 2

WHEN the tour came to an end in 1861, I went to London with my father to find an engagement, while Kate joined the ~~same company~~ at Bristol. We still gave the "Drawing-room Entertainment" at ~~night~~ in the summer, and it still drew large audiences.

inst., at the church of St Barnabas, Kensington, by the Rev Dr Hussey, and the name of the gentleman with whom the lady has become united in the bonds of matrimony is Mr G. F. Watts."

This cutting from a newspaper of January, 1864, was preserved by Ellen Terry in some reliquary or other for over forty years. In 1908, when her book was published, she transferred it to her copy, pasting it beneath the reproduction of Watts's picture "The Sisters." There is nothing to be said about the paragraph except that "child" would have been a more accurate description of the bride than "lady," but the place in her book chosen for its last resting place by Ellen Terry invites comment. She may have recalled that the first visit of "The Sisters," Kate and Ellen, to Watts's studio was the first step to the altar of St Barnabas's Church. Mr Watts had seen and admired Kate Terry on the stage, and asked his friend Tom Taylor to bring her to his studio. That her younger and then less famous sister should have accompanied Kate is not surprising. Kate had to be chaperoned, and Mrs Terry, busy at home with her large young family, was no doubt glad to let Nelly take her place. Contemporary descriptions of the sisters at this time confirm the evidence of Watts's picture that there was a very effective contrast in their looks. "The contrast was not one of colouring only, but of type. Clement Scott was conscious of this when he wrote that Kate was a pure English beauty, while Ellen was ideal, mystical and mediæval." If he did not get hold of the right words, he certainly got hold of the right idea.

The moment G. F. Watts clapped eyes on that "ideal" face, he seems to have recognised his ideal of an inspiring model. Like the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria, on a somewhat similar occasion, he turned from the elder sister, who was already in Tom Taylor's imagination the future Mrs Watts, to the younger. The marriage was arranged and all too shortly took place. It is not known whether the elderly artist, elderly that is in comparison with his bride—he was more than twice her age—felt any compunction at the innocent rapture of Ellen Terry at the prospect of living with him at Little Holland House. His first marriage is not even mentioned in his biography, a strange omission, hardly justified by the fact that his biographer was his second wife. But the conjecture that he had an uneasy conscience is reasonable. The late Lady Constance Leslie, who was present at the wedding, once told me that the contrast between the atrabilious bridegroom, walking slowly and heavily up the aisle, and the radiant child bride dancing up it on winged feet, struck her as painful. She recalled the lines:

Crabbed age and youth
Cannot live together
Youth is full of pleasaunce:
Age is full of care.

Apparently neither Tom Taylor, who had the interests of little Nelly at heart, nor her parents, who adored her, were as sensitive. They pleased that the child had made such a good marriage. As stage folk they have regretted the abrupt termination of a career so full of promise, but is no proof of this.

In London my name was put on an agent's books in the usual way, and presently he sent me to Madame Albina de Rhona, who had not long taken over the management of the Royal Soho Theatre and changed its name to the Royalty. French workmen had swept and garnished the dusty, dingy place and transformed it into a theatre as dainty and pretty as Madame de Rhona herself. Dancing was Madame's strong point, but she had been very successful as an actress too, first in Paris and Petersburg, and then in London at the St James's and Drury Lane. What made her go into management on her own account I don't know. I suppose she was ambitious, and rich enough for the enterprise.

At this time I was "in standing water," as Malvolio says of Viola when she is dressed as a boy. I was neither child nor woman—a long-legged girl of about thirteen, still in short skirts, and feeling that I ought to have long ones. However, when I set out with father to see Madame de Rhona, I was very smart. I borrowed Kate's new bonnet—pink silk trimmed with black lace—and thought I looked nice in it. So did father, for he said on the way to the theatre that pink was my colour. In fact, I am sure it was the bonnet that made Madame de Rhona engage me on the spot!

She was the first Frenchwoman I had ever met, and I was tremendously interested in her. Her neat and expressive ways made me feel very "small," or rather *big* and clumsy, even at the first interview. A quick-tempered, bright, energetic little woman, she nearly frightened me out of my wits at the first rehearsal by dancing round me on the stage in a perfect frenzy of anger at what she was pleased to call my stupidity. Then something I did suddenly pleased her, and she overwhelmed me with compliments and praise. After a time these became the order of the day, and she soon won my youthful affections. Madame de Rhona was very kind-hearted and generous. To her generosity I owed the first piece of jewellery I ever possessed—a pretty little brooch, which, with characteristic carelessness, I promptly lost! Besides being flattered by her praise and grateful for her kindness, I was filled with great admiration for her. She was a wee thing—like a toy, and her dancing was really exquisite. When I watched the way she moved her hands and feet, despair entered my soul. It was all so precise, so "express and admirable." Her limbs were so dainty and graceful—mine so big and unmanageable! "How long and gaunt I am," I used to say to myself, "and what a pattern of prim prettiness she is!" I was so much ashamed of my large hands, during this time at the Royalty, that I kept them tucked up under my arms! This subjected me to unmerciful criticism from Madame Albina at rehearsals.

"Take down your hands," she would call out. "*Mon Dieu!* It is like an ugly young *poulet* going to roost!"

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In spite of this, I did not lose my elegant habit for many years! I was only broken of it at last by a friend saying that he supposed I had very ugly hands, as I never showed them! That did it! Out came the hands to prove that they were not so *very* ugly, after all! Vanity often succeeds where remonstrance fails.

The greenroom at the Royalty was a very pretty little place, and Madame Albina sometimes had supper-parties there after the play. One night I could not resist the pangs of curiosity, and I peeped through the keyhole to see what was going on! I chose a lucky moment! One of Madame's admirers was drinking champagne out of her slipper! It was even worth the box on the ear that mother gave me when she caught me. She had been looking all over the theatre for me, to take me home.

My first part at the Royalty was Clementine in "Attar Gull." Of the play, adapted from a story by Eugene Sue, I have a very hazy recollection, but I know that I had one very effective scene in it. Clementine, an ordinary fair-haired ingénue in white muslin, has a great horror of snakes, and, in order to cure her, some one suggests that a dead snake should be put in her room, and she be taught how harmless the thing is for which she has such an aversion. An Indian servant, who, for some reason or other, has a deadly hatred for the whole family, substitutes a live reptile. Clementine appears at the window with the venomous creature coiled round her neck, screaming with terror. The spectators on the stage think that the snake is dead, and that she is only screaming from nerves, but in reality she is being slowly strangled. I began screaming in a frantic, heart-rending manner, and continued screaming, each cry surpassing the last in intensity and agony. At rehearsal I could not get these screams right for a long time. Madame de Rhona grew more and more impatient and at last flew at me like a wild-cat and shook me. I cried, just as I had done when I could not get Prince Arthur's terror right, and then the wild, agonised scream that Madame de Rhona wanted came to me. I *reproduced* it and enlarged it in effect. On the first night the audience applauded the screaming more than anything in the play. Madame de Rhona assured me that I had made a sensation, kissed me and said I was a genius! How sweet and pleasant her flattering words sounded in my young and inexperienced ears I need hardly say.

Looking back at it now, I know perfectly well why I, a mere child of thirteen, was able to give such a realistic display of horror. I had the emotional instinct to start with, no doubt, but if I did it well, it was because I was able to imagine what would be *real* in such a situation. I had never *observed* such horror, but I had previously *realised* it, when, as Arthur, I had imagined the terror of having my eyes put out.

Imagination! imagination! I put it first years ago, when I was asked

1861); Clara ("Matrimony," 1861); Mabel ("A Lesson for Husbands," 1861); Mrs Brinstone ("A Nice Quiet Day," 1861); Florence ("A Chinese Honey-moon," 1862); Louisa Drayton ("Grandfather Whitehead," 1862); Clorinda ("A Family Failing," 1862); Margot ("The Sergeant's Wife," 1862); Sally Potts ("The Eton Boy," 1862); Kate Mapleton ("Nine Points of the Law," 1862); Cupid ("Endymion," 1862); Alice ("Marriage at any Price," 1862); Dictys ("Perseus and Andromeda," 1862); Marie ("The Marble Heart," 1862); Marguerite de Stormberg ("The Angel at Midnight," 1862); Gertrude Howard ("The Little Treasure," 1862); Serena ("Conrad and Medera," 1862); Fanny Fact ("Time Tries All," 1862); Spirit of the Future ("Opening Ceremony at the Theatre Royal, Bath," 1863); Titania ("A Midsummer Night's Dream," 1863); Britannia ("Buckstone at Home," 1863); Hero ("Much Ado About Nothing," 1863); Lady Frances Touchwood ("The Belle's Stratagem," 1863); Desdemona ("Othello," 1863); Mary Ford ("A Lesson for Life," 1863); Isabella ("A Game of Romps," 1863); Flora ("The Duke's Motto," 1863); Nerissa ("The Merchant of Venice," 1863); Constance Belmore ("One Touch of Nature," 1863); Julia Melville ("The Rivals," 1863); Sir Tristram ("King Arthur," 1863); Mary Meredith ("The American Cousin," 1863).

what qualities I thought necessary for success upon the stage. And I am still of the same opinion. Imagination, industry, and intelligence—"the three I's"—are all indispensable to the actress, but of these three the greatest is, without any doubt, imagination.

After this "screaming" success, which, however, did not keep "Attar Gull" in the bill at the Royalty for more than a few nights, I continued to play under Madame de Rhona's management until February 1862. During these few months new plays were being constantly put on, for Madame was somehow not very fortunate in gauging the taste of the public. It was in the fourth production—"The Governor's Wife"—that, as Letty Briggs, I had my first experience of what is called "stage fright." I had been on the stage more than five years, and had played at least sixteen parts, so there was really no excuse for me. I suspect now that I had not taken enough pains to get word-perfect. I know I had five new parts to study between November 21 and December 26.

Stage fright is like nothing else in the world. You are standing on the stage apparently quite well and in your right mind, when suddenly you feel as if your tongue had been dislocated and was lying powerless in your mouth. Cold shivers begin to creep downwards from the nape of your neck and all up you at the same time, until they seem to meet in the small of your back. About this time you feel as if a centipede, all of whose feet have been carefully iced, has begun to run about in the roots of your hair. The next agreeable sensation is the breaking out of a cold sweat all over. Then you are certain that some one has cut the muscles at the back of your knees. Your mouth begins to open slowly, without giving utterance to a single sound, and your eyes seem inclined to jump out of your head over the footlights. At this point it is as well to get off the stage as quickly as you can, for you are far beyond human help.

Whether everybody suffers in this way or not I cannot say, but it exactly describes the torture I went through in "The Governor's Wife." I had just enough strength and sense to drag myself off the stage and seize a book, with which, after a few minutes, I reappeared and ignominiously read my part. Whether Madame de Rhona boxed my ears or not, I can't remember, but I think it is very likely, for she was very quick-tempered. In later years I have not suffered from the fearsome malady, but even now, after fifty years of stage-life, I never play a new part without being overcome by a terrible nervousness and a torturing dread of forgetting my lines. Every nerve in my body seems to be dancing an independent jig on its own account.

It was at the Royalty that I first acted with Mr Kendal. He and I played together in a comedietta called "A Nice Quiet Day." Soon after,

The tortoisés, bought to eat the beetles, had been eaten themselves. At least, the shells were found full of beetles.

And the armadillos? "The air of Chelsea don't suit them," said Rossetti's servant. They had certainly left Rossetti's house, but they had not left Chelsea. All the neighbours had dozens of them! They had burrowed, and came up smiling in houses where they were far from well-come.

This, by the way, Miss Herbert, who looked like the Blessed Damsel leaning out "across the bar of heaven," was not very well suited to the line of parts that she was playing at the St James's, but she was very much admired. During the run of "Friends and Foes" she fell ill. Her illness was Kate's opportunity. From the night that Kate played Mrs Union, her reputation was made.

It was a splendid chance, no doubt, but of what use would it have been to any one who was not ready to use it? Kate, though only about nineteen at this time, was a finished actress. She had been a perfect Ariel, a beautiful Cordelia, and had played at least forty other parts of importance since she had appeared as a tiny Robin in the Kean's production of "The Merry Wives of Windsor." She had not had her head turned by big salaries, and she had never ceased working since she was four years old. No wonder that she was capable of bearing the burden of a piece at a moment's notice. The Americans cleverly say that "the lucky cat *watches*;" I should add that the lucky cat *works*. Reputations on the stage—at any rate, enduring reputations—are not made by chance, and to an actress who has not worked hard the finest opportunity in the world will be utterly useless.

Kate's acting, unlike that of Adelaide Neilsen, who was the great popular favourite before Kate came to the front, was scientific. She knew what she was about. There was more idealism than passionate womanliness in her interpretations. For this reason, perhaps, her Cordelia was finer than her Portia or her Beatrice.

She was engaged at one time to a young actor, called Montagu. If the course of that love affair had run smooth, where should I have been? Kate would have been the Terry of the age. But Mr Montagu went to America, and, after five years of life as a matinee idol, died there. Before that, Arthur Lewis had come along. I was glad because he was rich, and during his courtship of my sister I had some riding, of which in my girlhood I was passionately fond.

Tom Taylor had an enormous admiration for Kate, and during her second season as a "star" at Bristol he came down to see her play Juliet and Beatrice and Portia.

From Bristol my sister went to London to become Fechter's "leading

my engagement came to an end, and I went to Bristol, where I gained the experience of my life with a stock company.

§ 3

"I THINK anything, naturally written, ought to be in everybody's way that pretends to be an actor." This remark of Colley Cibber's long ago struck me as an excellent motto for a beginner on the stage. The ambitious boy thinks of Hamlet, the ambitious girl of Juliet, but where shall we find the young actor and actress whose heart is set on being useful?

Usefulness! It is not a fascinating word, and the quality is not one of which the aspiring spirit can dream o' nights, yet on the stage it is the first thing to aim at. Not until we have learned to be useful can we afford to do what we like. The tragedian will always be a limited tragedian if he has not learned how to laugh. The comedian who cannot weep will never touch the highest levels of mirth.

It was in the stock companies that we learned the great lesson of usefulness; we played everything—tragedy, comedy, farce, and burlesque. There was no question of parts "suiting" us; we had to take what we were given.

The first time I was cast for a part in a burlesque I told the stage manager I couldnt sing and I couldnt dance. His reply was short and to the point. "You've got to." And so I sang and danced in a way—a very funny way at first, no doubt. It was admirable training, for it took all the self-consciousness out of me to start with. To end with, I thought it capital fun, and enjoyed burlesque as much as Shakespeare.

What was a stock company? I forget that in these days the question may be asked in all good faith, and that it is necessary to answer it. Well, then, a stock company was a company of actors and actresses brought together by the manager of a provincial theatre to support a leading actor or actress—"a star"—from London. When Edmund Kean, the Kembles, Macready, or Mrs Siddons visited provincial towns, these companies were ready to support them in Shakespeare. They were also ready to play burlesque, farce, and comedy to fill out the bill. Sometimes the "stars" would come for a whole season; if their magnitude were of the first order, for only one night. Sometimes they would rehearse with the stock company, sometimes they wouldnt. There is a story of a manager visiting Edmund Kean at his hotel on his arrival in a small provincial town, and asking the great actor when he would rehearse.

"Rehearse! I'm not going to rehearse. I'm going to sleep!"

"Have you any instructions?"

"Instructions! No! Tell 'em to keep a long arm's length away from me and do their damned worst!"

At Bristol, where I joined Mr J. H. Chute's stock company in 1861, we had no experience of that kind, perhaps because there was no Kean alive to give it to us. And I don't think that our "worst" would have been so very bad. Mr Chute, who had married Macready's half-sister, was a splendid manager, and he contrived to gather round him a company which was something more than "sound."

Several of its members distinguished themselves greatly in after years. Among these I may mention Miss Marie Wilton (now Lady Bancroft) and Miss Madge Robertson (now Mrs Kendal).

Lady Bancroft had left the company before I joined it, but Mrs Kendal was there, and so was Miss Henrietta Hodson (afterwards Mrs Labouchere). I was much struck at that time by Mrs Kendal's singing. Her voice was beautiful. As an example of how anything can be twisted to make mischief, I may quote here an absurd tarradiddle about Mrs Kendal never forgetting in after years that in the Bristol stock company she had to play the singing fairy to my Titania in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The simple explanation was that she had the best voice in the company, and was of such infinite value in singing parts that no manager in his senses would have taken her out of them. There was no question of my taking precedence of her, or of her playing second fiddle to me.

Miss Hodson was a brilliant burlesque actress, a good singer, and a capital dancer. She had great personal charm, too, and was an enormous favourite with the Bristol public. I cannot exactly call her a "rival" of my sister Kate's, for Kate was the "principal lady" or "star," and Henrietta Hodson the "soubrette," and, in burlesque, the "principal boy." Nevertheless, there were certainly rival factions of admirers, and the friendly antagonism between the Hodsonites and the Terryites used to amuse us all greatly.

We were petted, spoiled, and applauded to our hearts' content, but I don't think it did us any harm. We all had scores of admirers, but their youthful ardour seemed to be satisfied by tracking us when we went to rehearsal in the morning and waiting for us outside the stage-door at night.

When Kate and I had a "benefit" night, they had an opportunity of coming to rather closer quarters, for on these occasions tickets could be bought from members of the company, as well as at the box-office of the theatre.

Our lodgings in Queen Square were besieged by Bristol youths who were anxious to get a glimpse of the Terrys. The Terrys demurely chatted

ONE very foggy night in December 1867—it was Boxing Day, I think—I acted for the first time with Henry Irving. This was a great event in my life, but at the time it passed me by and left “no wrack behind.” Ever anxious to improve on the truth, which is often devoid of all sensationism, people have told a story of Henry Irving promising that if he ever were in a position to offer me an engagement I should be his leading lady. The latest tale of our first meeting was told during my jubilee. Then, to my amazement, I read that on that famous night when I was playing Puck at the Princess’s, and caught my toe in the trap, “a young man with dark hair and a white face rushed forward from the crowd of supers and said: ‘Never mind, darling. Don’t cry! One day you will be queen of the stage.’ It was Henry Irving!”

In view of these legends, I ought to assert all the more stoutly that, until I went to the Lyceum Theatre, Henry Irving was nothing to me and I nothing to him. I never consciously thought that he would become a

§ 3

“Any lady ‘ere of that name?”

“No.”

“Well, I think she’s married, and changed her name, but she’s ‘ere right enough. Tell ‘er I won’t keep ‘er a minute. I’m ‘er bloody old father!”

for Leonora Pincoff.

This fondness for aristocratic society gave additional spice to the story that one day a blue-eyed old cabman in capes and muffer descended from the box of a disreputable-looking growler, and inquired at the stage-door

gave herself great airs and graces, and outside it hobnobbed with duchesses and princesses.

Dear old Mrs Wigan! The stories that have been told about her would fill a book! She was exceedingly plain, rather like a toad, yet, perversely, she was more vain of her looks than of her acting. In the theatre she

stagebox. I was simply paralysed with terror.

out her threat. The very next time we laughed a loud hiss rose from the said if we did it again, she would go in front and hiss us, and she carried ter. We hung on to chairs, helpless, limp, and incapable. Mrs. Wigan

It’s *bine!*” The very thought of it used to send us off into fits of laughing a mere child myself, and with a bad cold in my head too, answering: Wyndham. He had a line, “Whose child is this?” and there was I, looking absurdly young. There was one “curtain” which used to convulse As Rose de Beaurepaire, I wore a white muslin Directoire dress and was in “The Double Marriage,” the first play put on at the New Queen’s.

I never forgot it, though I will not say I never fooled again. I think it

with them and sold them tickets. My mother was most vigilant in her rôle of duenna, and from the time I first went on the stage until I was a grown woman I can never remember going home unaccompanied by either her or my father.

The leading male members of Mr Chute's stock company were Arthur Wood (an admirable comedian), William George Rignold, W. H. Vernon, and Charles Coghlan. At this time Charles Coghlan was acting magnificently, and dressing each of his characters so correctly and so perfectly that most of the audience did not understand it. For instance, as Glavis, in "The Lady of Lyons," he looked a picture of the Directoire fop. He did not compromise in any single detail, but wore the long straggling hair, the high cravat, the eye-glass, bows, jags, and tags, to the infinite amusement of some members of the audience, who could not imagine what his quaint dress meant. Coghlan's clothes were not more perfect than his manner, but both were a little in advance of the appreciation of Bristol playgoers in the 'sixties.

At the Princess's Theatre I had gained my experience of long rehearsals. When I arrived in Bristol I was to learn the value of short ones. Mr Chute took me in hand, and I had to wake up and be alert with brains and body. The first part I played was Cupid in "Endymion." To this day I can remember my lines. I entered as a blind old woman in what is known in theatrical jargon as a "disguise cloak."

Pity the poor blind—what, no one here?
Nay then, I'm not so blind as I appear,
And so to throw off all disguise and sham,
Let me at once inform you who I am! (throwing off cloak)
I'm Cupid!

Henrietta Hodson as Endymion and Kate as Diana had a dance with me which used to bring down the house. I wore a short tunic which in those days was considered too scanty to be "quite nice," and carried the conventional bow and quiver.

In another burlesque, "Perseus and Andromeda," I played Dictys; it was in this piece that Arthur Wood used to make people laugh by punning on the line: "Such a mystery (Miss Terry) here!" It was an absurd little joke, but the people used to cheer and applaud.

§ 4

WHILE my stage education was progressing apace, I was, through the influence of a very wonderful family whose acquaintance we made, having my eyes opened to beautiful things in art and literature. Mr Godwin,

fulfill an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre, of which Mr Buckstone was still the manager and Sothern the great attraction. I had played Gertrude Howard in "The Little Treasure" during the stock season at Bristol, and when Mr Buckstone wanted to revive the piece at the Haymarket, he was told about me. I was fifteen at this time, and my sense of humour was as yet ill-developed. I was fond of "larking" and merry enough, but I hated being laughed at! At any rate, I could see no humour in Mr Sothern's jokes at my expense. He played my lover in "The Little Treasure," and he was always teasing me—pulling my hair, making me forget my part and look like an idiot. But for dear old Mr Howe, who was my "father" in the same piece, I should not have enjoyed acting in it at all, but he made amends for everything. We had a scene together in which he used to cry, and I used to cry—oh, it was lovely!

Why I should never have liked Sothern, with his wonderful hands and blue eyes, Sothern, whom every one found so fascinating and delightful, I cannot say, and I record it as discreditable to me, not to him. I admired him—I could not help doing that—but I dreaded his jokes, and thought some of them very cruel.

Another thing I thought cruel at this time was the scandal which was talked in the theatre. A change for the better has taken place in this respect—at any rate, in conduct. People behave better now, and in our profession, carried on as it is in the public eye, behaviour is everything. At the Haymarket there were simply no bounds to what was said in the greenroom. One night I remember gathering up my skirts (we were, I think, playing "The Rivals" at the time), making a curtsy, as Mr Chippendale, one of the best actors in old comedy I ever knew, had taught me, and sweeping out of the room with the famous line from another Sheridan play: "Ladies and gentlemen, I leave my character behind me!"

I see now that was very priggish of me, but I am quite as unpromising in my hatred of scandal now as I was then. Quite recently I had a line to say in "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," which is a very helpful reply to any tale-bearing. "As if any one ever knew the whole truth about anything!" That is just the point. It is only the whole truth which is informing and fair in the long run, and the whole truth is never known.

I regard my engagement at the Haymarket as one of my lost opportunities, which in after years I would have given much to have had over again. I might have learned so much more than I did. I was preoccupied by events outside the theatre. Tom Taylor, who had for some time been a good friend to both Kate and me, had introduced us to Mr Watts, the great painter, and to me the stage seemed a poor place when compared with the wonderful studio where Kate and I were painted as "The Sis-

ters." At the Taylors' house, too, the friends, the arts, the refinements had an enormous influence on me, and for a time the theatre became almost distasteful. Never at any time in my life have I been ambitious, but at the Haymarket I was not even passionately anxious to do my best with every part that came my way—a quality which with me has been a good substitute for ambition. I was just dreaming of and aspiring after another world, a world full of pictures and music and gentle, artistic people with quiet voices and elegant manners. The reality of such a world was Little Holland House, the home of Mr Watts.

So I confess quite frankly that I did not appreciate until it was too late my advantages in serving at the Haymarket with comrades who were the most surpassingly fine actors and actresses in old comedy that I have ever known. There were Mr Buckstone, the Chippendales, Mr Compton, Mr Farren. They one and all thoroughly understood Sheridan. Their bows, their curtsies, their grand manner, the indefinable *style* which they brought to their task, were something to see. We shall never know their like again, and the smoothest old-comedy acting of this age seems rough in comparison. Of course, we suffer more with every fresh decade that separates us from Sheridan. As he gets farther and farther away, the traditions of the performances which he directed become vaguer and vaguer. Mr Chippendale knew these traditions backwards. He might even have known Sheridan himself. Charles Reade's mother did know him, and sat on the stage with him while he rehearsed "The School for Scandal" with Mrs Abingdon, the original Lady Teazle.

Mrs Abingdon, according to Charles Reade, who told the story, had just delivered the line, "How dare you abuse my relations?" when Sheridan stopped the rehearsal.

"No, no, that wont do at all! It mustnt be *pettish*. That's shallow—shallow. You must go up stage with, 'You are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be,' and then turn and sweep down on him like a volcano. 'You are a great bear to abuse my relations! How *dare* you abuse my relations!'"

I hope to refrain, in telling the story of my life, from praising the past at the expense of the present. It is always an easy thing for the old to do, as the young, however sceptical, are unable to test the truth of their elders' eulogies. Yet I must put on record that although I have seen many improvements in actors and acting since I was at the Haymarket, I have never seen old comedy acted as it was acted there.

Not that I was much good at it myself. I played Julia in "The Rivals" very ill; it was too difficult and subtle for me—ungrateful into the bargain—and I even made a blunder in bringing down the curtain on the first night. It fell to my lot to finish the play—in players' language, to

I was barely twenty when I left the stage for the second time, and I haven't made up my mind yet whether it was good or bad for me, as an actress, to cease from practising my craft for six years. Talma, the great French actor, recommends long spells of rest. This comes in very useful in my defence, yet I am not convinced they are always beneficial. I can't imagine Henry Irving leaving the stage for six months, much less for six years, and I don't think it would have been of the slightest benefit to him. But he had not been on the stage as a child. If I was able to rest so long without rusting, it was, I am sure, because I had been thoroughly trained in the technique of acting long before I reached my twentieth year—an age at which most students are just beginning to wrestle with elementary principles.

Of course, I did not argue in this way at the time! I had no intention of ever acting again when I left the Queen's Theatre. If it is the mark of the artist to love art before everything, to renounce everything for its sake, to think all the sweet human things of life well lost if only he may attain something, do some good, great work—then I was never an artist. I have been happiest in my work when I was working for some one else. I admire those impersonal people who care for nothing outside their own ambition, yet I detest them at the same time, and I have the simplest faith that absolute devotion to another human being means the greatest *happiness*. That happiness for a time was now mine.

I led a most unconventional life, and experienced exquisite delight from the mere fact of being in the country. No one knows what "the country" means until he or she has lived in it. "Then, if ever, come perfect days."

What a sensation it was, too, to be untrammelled by time! Actors must take care of themselves and their voices, husband and their strength for the evening work, and when it is over they are too tired to do anything! For the first time I was able to put all my energies into living. Charles Lamb writes that when he left the East India House, he felt embarrassed by the vast estates of time at his disposal, and wished that he had a bailiff to manage them for him, but I knew no such embarrassment when I left the stage. I began gardening, "the purest of human pleasures"; I learned to cook, and in time cooked very well, though my first essay in that difficult art was rewarded with dire and complete failure.

It was a chicken! Now, as all the chickens had names—Sultan, Duke, Lord Tom Noddy, Lady Teazle, and so forth—and as I was very proud of them as living birds, it was a great wrench to kill one at all, to start with. It was the murder of Sultan, not the killing of a chicken. However, at last it was done, and Sultan deprived of his feathers, floured, and

speaking the "tag." Now, it has been a superstition among actors for centuries that it is unlucky to speak the "tag" in full at rehearsal. So during the rehearsals of "The Rivals," I followed precedent and did not say the last two or three words of my part and of the play, but just "mum, mum, mum!" When the first night came, instead of dropping my voice with the last word in the conventional and proper manner, I ended with an upward inflection, which was right for the sense, but wrong for the curtain.

This unexpected innovation produced utter consternation all round me. The prompter was so much astounded that he thought there was something more coming and did not give the "pull" for the curtain to come down. There was a horrid pause while it remained up, and then Mr Buckstone, the Bob Acres of the cast, who was very deaf and had not heard the upward inflection, exclaimed loudly and irritably: "Eh! eh! What does this mean? Why the devil don't you bring down the curtain?" And he went on cursing until it did come down. This experience made me think more than ever of the advice of an old actor: "Never leave your stage effects to *chance*, my child, but *rehearse*, and find out all about it!"

How I wished I had rehearsed that "tag" and taken the risk of being unlucky!

For the credit of my intelligence I should add that the mistake was a technical one, not a stupid one. The line was a question. It *demand*ed an upward inflection; but no play can end like that.

It was not all old comedy at the Haymarket. "Much Ado About Nothing" was put on during my engagement, and I played Hero to Miss Louisa Angell's Beatrice. Miss Angell was a very modern Beatrice, but I, though I say it "as shouldnt," played Hero beautifully! I remember wondering if I should ever play Beatrice. I just *wondered*, that was all. It was the same when Miss Angell played Letitia Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem," and I was Lady Touchwood. I just wondered! I never felt jealous of other people having bigger parts; I never looked forward consciously to a day when I should have them myself. There was no virtue in it. It was just because I wasnt ambitious.

Louise Keeley, a pretty little woman and clever, took my fancy more than any one else in the company. She was always merry and kind, and I admired her dainty, vivacious acting. In a burlesque called "Buckstone at Home" (in which I played Britannia and came up a trap in a huge pearl, which opened and disclosed me) Miss Keeley was delightful. One evening the Prince and Princess of Wales (now our King and Queen)¹ came to see "Buckstone at Home." I believe it was the very first time they had appeared at a theatre since their marriage. They sat far back

¹ Edward VII and Queen Alexandra.

"Boo" became an institution in these days. She was the wife of a doctor who kept a private asylum in the neighbouring village, and on his death she tried to look after the lunatics herself. But she wasn't

him at all. and it made me laugh so much that I let him go and never punished him one day chasing my daughter. I seized him by his horns to inflict severe punishment; but then I saw that his eyes were exactly like mine, We kept a goat, a dear fellow whom I liked very much until I caught for the lady!"

"I don't half like it," she said. "They'll take you for the cook, and me dock! I went to church in blue-and-white cotton, with my servant in silk. grew thinner than ever—as thin as a whippoorwill, or a hurdle, or a had-floors and lighting fires, cooking, gardening, and harnessing the pony, I It was truly the simple life we led in Hertfordshire. From scrubbing immediately and humbly obeyed.

brought me here!" No wonder she was considered a dour child! I she said: "Take me away! take me away! you ought never to have clown pretended to fall from the tight-rope, and the drum went bang! When I took her to her first theatre—it was Sanger's Circus—and the a radish. It's as big as—as big as *God!*"

should have come running to beg me to come quick: "Miss Eddy found that when she dug up a turnip in the garden for the first time, she could cry. But why should any one be interested in that? Is it interesting morning, with the reassuring information that "there are lots more," I think of little Eddy bringing me in minute bunches of flowers all the "Peter Pan" for the seventh time: "Oh, for an hour of Herod!" When I some one will exclaim with a witty and delightful author when he saw I feel that if I go maundering on much longer about my children,

woman! exhort him, when he said, "Master Teddy afraid of the dark," to be a She used to hit him on the head with a wooden spoon for crying, and "The feather of England" was considered by his sister a great coward. looking, she called "the feather of England."

The nursemaid, Essie, described Eddy tersely as "a picc," while Teddy, who was adored by every one because he was fat and fair and angelic-

"Birds!"

livered herself once, she might lapse into dumbness.

"More what?" I asked in a trembling voice, afraid that having de-

She spoke quite distinctly. It was almost uncanny.

"There's some more."

for the first time:

with her grave dark eyes. We were out driving when I heard her voice

in the royal box, the ladies and gentlemen of their suite occupying the front seats. Miss Keeley, dressed as a youth, had a song in which she brought forward by the hand some well-known characters in fairy tales and nursery rhymes—Cinderella, Little Boy Blue, Jack and Jill, and so on, and introduced them to the audience in a topical verse. One verse ran:

Here's the Prince of Happyland,
Once he dwelt at the Lyceum;
Here's another Prince at hand,
But being *invisible*, you cant see him!

Probably the Prince of Wales must have wished the singer at—well, not at the Haymarket Theatre; but the next minute he must have been touched by the loyal greeting that he received. When the audience grasped the situation, every one—stalls, boxes, circle, pit, gallery—stood up and cheered and cheered again. Never was there a more extraordinary scene in a playhouse—such excitement, such enthusiasm! The action of the play came to a full stop, but not the cheers. They grew louder and louder, until the Prince came forward and bowed his acknowledgments. I doubt if any royal personage has ever been so popular in England as he was. Of course he is popular as King too, but as Prince of Wales he came nearer the people. They had more opportunities of seeing him, and they appreciated his untiring efforts to make up by his many public appearances for the seclusion in which the Queen lived.

§ 5

IN the middle of the run of "The American Cousin" I left the stage and married. Mary Meredith was the part, and I played it vilely. I was not quite sixteen years old, too young to be married even in those days, when every one married early. But I was delighted, and my parents were delighted, although the disparity of age between my husband and me was very great. It all seems like a dream—not a clear dream, but a fitful one which in the morning one tries in vain to tell. And even if I could tell it, I would not. I was happy, because my face was the type which the great artist who had married me loved to paint. I remember sitting to him in armour for hours, and never realising that it was heavy until I fainted!

The day of my wedding it was very cold. I can always remember what I was wearing on the important occasions of my life.¹ On that day I wore a brown silk gown which had been designed by Holman Hunt,

¹ Notice the definiteness of Ellen Terry's memory of her Mamillius dress described on p. 16.

and a quilted white bonnet with a sprig of orange-blossom, and I was wrapped in a beautiful Indian shawl. I "went away" in a sealskin jacket with coral buttons, and a little sealskin cap. I cried a great deal, and Mr Watts said, "Dont cry. It makes your nose swell." The day I left home to be married. I "tubbed" all my little brothers and sisters and washed their fair hair.

Little Holland House, where Mr Watts lived, seemed to me a paradise, where only beautiful things were allowed to come. All the women were graceful, and all the men were gifted. A trio of sisters—Mrs Prinsep—(mother of the painter), Lady Somers, and Mrs Cameron, a pioneer in artistic photography—were known as Beauty, Dash, and Talent. There were two more beautiful sisters, Mrs Jackson and Mrs Dalrymple. Gladstone, Disraeli and Browning were among Mr Watt's visitors. At Freshwater, where I went on a visit soon after my marriage, I first saw Tennyson.

As I write down these great names, I feel apprehensive of rousing expectations in the reader which I shall be unable to satisfy. For my recollections of the men to whom the names belong are very incomplete. I remember thinking that Mr Gladstone was like a volcano at rest; his face was pale and calm, but the calm was the calm of the grey crust of Etna. You looked into the piercing dark eyes and caught a glimpse of the red-hot crater beneath the crust. Years later when I met him at the Lyceum, I had exactly the same impression. Then I became better acquainted with him, and discovered that he was one of the best "audiences" actor or actress could desire. He used often to come to the Lyceum and watch the play from a little seat in the O. P. corner. Henry Irving covered the seat with red baize and hung up curtains so that our great visitor should be protected from draughts. It was not only on account of his deafness that Mr Gladstone preferred this corner close to the actors to a stall or box. He could come and go without attracting attention. But he seldom took advantage of this, nearly always arriving five minutes before the curtain went up, and staying until the end of the play. One bitter winter night I feared he would catch cold, and I lent him a white scarf which he wore with great dignity.

He could always give his whole mind to the thing which claimed his interest at the moment. This made him one of the most comfortable people to talk to that I have ever met. In everything he was thorough. Would that all playgoers were as punctual and as capable of such concentration!

I remember contrasting his punctuality when he came to see "King Lear" with the unpunctuality of another statesman, Lord Randolph Churchill, who came to see the same play the following evening.

He began by buying *real* pigs, *real* sheep, a *real* goat, and a *real* dog. *Real* litter was strewn all over the stage, much to the inconvenience of the unreal farm-labourer, Charles Kelly, who could not compete with it, although he looked as like a farmer as any actor could. They all looked their parts better than the real wall which ran across the stage,

I think he was quite right about this. Would that he had been as right in his theories about stage management! He was a rare one for realism. He had *preached* it in all his plays, and when he produced a one-act play, "Rachael the Reaper," in front of "The Wandering Heir," he began to practise what he preached—jumped into reality up to the neck!

There, my Eleanora Delicia (this was his name for me, my real, full name being Ellen Alicia), stick that up in some place where you will often see it. Better put it on *your looking-glass*. And if you can once get those words into your noddle, it will save you a world of unhappiness.

THERE DO EXIST SUCH THINGS AS HONEST MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

big letters:

morning he wrote me a letter with the following postscript written in He used to say that there should be no such word as "quarrel," and one some justification because we had suffered so much from being estranged. me some "treat"—a luncheon, a present, or a drive. We both felt we needed to quarrel with him, because when we made it up he was sure to give though it was a painful time for both of us, it was almost worth while Behind Me" with such pathos that he himself was moved to tears. But, at the Tom Taylors', on Sunday evenings, and sing "The Girl I Left gentleman of the Colonel Newcome type whom I had seen stand up violence that it was almost impossible to identify him with the kind old this unfair, as the work had to be done, and flamed out at us with such hearsal looking so tired yesterday? You work her too hard." He thought very lightly and playfully: "Why did poor Nell come home from re- rage, and his dark eyes blazed, because the same "pulling woman" said than you do, or any pulling woman." Another time he grew white with "Your Nelly!" said Charles Recade. "I love her a thousand times better resented this very much: "How can you say such things to my Nelly?" desert a sinking ship!" My dear old companion, Boo, who was with me, for Susan Merton. For answer I got a fiery "Madam, you are a rat! You ventured to suggest that it would be good economy to get some one else for acting. I knew that the tour was not a financial success, and I had a part which I could not bear to be paid twenty-five pounds a week version of "Hard Cash." In this play, which was known as "Our Seaman,"

He arrived with a party of men friends when the first act was over!

Of Disraeli in those days at Little Holland House I have a vaguer memory than of Gladstone. His name conjures up a garden party; I am struck by the appearance of a man with Jewish features, who wears a garish blue tie. His straggling black curls shake as he walks. The picture melts into one of Henry Irving as Shylock. Both noble Jews. I know I must have admired Disraeli greatly at first sight, for some time afterwards when I saw him walking in Piccadilly on the Green Park side, I crossed the road to have a good look at him. I even went so far as to bump into him to make him raise his head. It was a very little bump! My elbow just touched his, and then I felt embarrassed. He took off his hat, looked at me, and, not recognising me, muttered "I beg your pardon" and passed on. I had had my look, and can see now those quiet, rather indifferent eyes, which didn't open wide.

Tennyson was more to me than a magic-lantern shape, flitting across the blank of my young experience. The first time I saw him he was sitting at the table in his library, and Mrs Tennyson, her very slender hands hidden by thick gloves, was standing on a step-ladder handing him down some heavy books. She was very frail, and reminded me of a slender-stalked tea-rose. After that one time I only remember her lying on a sofa.

In the evenings I went walking with Tennyson over the fields, and he would point out to me the differences in the flight of different birds, and tell me to watch their solid phalanxes turning against the sunset, the compact wedge suddenly narrowing sharply into a thin line. He taught me to recognise the barks of trees and to call wild flowers by their names. He picked me the first bit of pimpernel I ever noticed. Always I was quite at ease with him. He was so wonderfully simple.

A hat that I wore at Freshwater suddenly comes to my remembrance. It was a brown straw mushroom with a dull red feather round it. It was tied under my chin, and I still had my hair down.

It was easy enough for me to believe that Tennyson was a poet. He showed it in everything, although he was entirely free from romantic airs and graces. What a contrast he was to Browning, with his carefully brushed hat, smart coat, and fine society manners!

At the time of my first marriage, when I met these great men, I had never had the advantage—I assume that it *is* an advantage!—of a single day's schooling in a *real school*. What I have learned outside my own profession I have learned from my environment. Perhaps it is this which makes me think environment is more important than education in forming character.

At Freshwater I was still so young that I preferred playing Indians

and Knights of the Round Table with Tennyson's sons, Hallam and Lionel, and the young Camerons, to sitting indoors noticing what the poet did and said. I was mighty proud when I learned how to prepare his daily pipe for him. It was a long church-warden, and he liked the stem to be steeped in a solution of sal volatile, or something of that kind, so that it did not stick to his lips. But he and all the others seemed to me very old. There were my young knights waiting for me; and jumping gates, climbing trees, and running paper-chases are pleasant when one is young.

It was not to inattentive ears that Tennyson read his poems. His reading was most impressive, but I think he read Browning's "Ride from Ghent to Aix" better than anything of his own, except, perhaps, "The Northern Farmer." He used to preserve the monotonous rhythm of the galloping horses in Browning's poem, and made the words come out sharply like hoofs upon a road. It was a little comic until one got used to it, but that fault lay in the ear of the hearer. It was the right way and the fine way to read this particular poem, and I have never forgotten it.

In after years I met Tennyson again, when with Henry Irving I acted in two of his plays at the Lyceum. When I come to those plays, I shall have more to say of him. Browning too I met in later years, but only at dinner-parties. I knew him no better than in this early period, when I was Nelly Watts, and heedless of the greatness of great men, "To meet an angel and not be afraid is to be impudent." I don't like to confess to it, but I think I must have been, according to this definition, *very* impudent!

One charming domestic arrangement at Freshwater was the serving of the dessert in a separate room from the rest of the dinner. And such a dessert it always was! Fruit piled high on great dishes in Veronese fashion, not the few nuts and an orange of some English households.

It must have been some years after the Freshwater days, yet before the production of "The Cup," that I saw Tennyson in his carriage outside a jeweller's shop in Bond Street.

"How very nice you look in the daytime," he remarked. "Not like an actress!"

I disclaimed my singularity, and said I thought actresses looked *very* nice in the daytime.

To him and to the others my early romance was always the most interesting thing about me. When I saw them in later times, it seemed as if months, not years, had passed since I was Nelly Watts.

Once, at the dictates of a conscience, perhaps an over-scrupulous conscience, I made a bonfire of my letters. But a few were saved from the burning, more by accident than design. Among them I found yesterday

"The hussy" had an entire ecstatic reception from the audience at the New Queen's Theatre the night she made her re-appearance in "The Wandering Heir" (February 28, 1874, the day after her twenty-sixth birthday). The play, inspired by the famous Tichborne case, had been running successfully for some time with Mrs John Wood as Philippa Chester, and now curiosity to see Ellen Terry in the part gave it a new lease of life. It was transferred to Astley's Theatre in the following April.

"A few days after Ellen Terry's death her daughter found a piece of paper labelled 'My Friends.' In this roll of honour which there was evidence was of very recent date, the name of Charles Reade was written first. Directly underneath it was the name of Bernard Shaw" (From "Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw: A Correspondence").

4. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter IV were: Philippa Chester ("The Wandering Heir," 1874); Susan Merton ("Never Too Late to Mend," 1874); Helen Rolleston ("Our Seaman," 1874); Volante ("The Honeymoon," 1874); Kate Hardcastle ("She Stoops to Conquer," 1874).

a kind little note from Sir William Vernon Harcourt, which shows me that I must have known him, too, at the time of my first marriage and met him later on when I returned to the stage.

"You cannot tell how much pleased I am to hear that you have been as happy as you deserve to be. The longer one lives, the more one learns not to despair, and to believe that nothing is impossible to those who have courage and hope and youth—I was going to add beauty and genius." (*This is the sort of thing that made me blush—and burn my letters!*)

"My little boy is still the charm and consolation of my life. He is now twelve years old, and though I say it that should not, is a perfect child, and wins the hearts of all who know him."

That little boy, now in His Majesty's Government, is known as the Right Honourable Lewis Harcourt. He married an American lady, Miss Burns of New York.

Many inaccurate stories have been told of my brief married life, and I have never contradicted them—they were so manifestly absurd. Those who can imagine the surroundings into which I, a raw girl, undeveloped in all except my training as an actress, was thrown, can imagine the situation.

Of one thing I am certain. While I was with Signor—the name by which Mr Watts was known among his friends—I never had one single pang of regret for the theatre. This may do me no credit, but it is *true*.

I wondered at the new life, and worshipped it because of its beauty. When it suddenly came to an end, I was thunderstruck; and refused at first to consent to the separation, which was arranged for me in much the same way as my marriage had been.

The whole thing was managed by those kind friends whose chief business in life seems to be the care of others. I don't blame them. There are things for which no one is to blame. "There do exist such things as honest misunderstandings," as Charles Reade was always impressing on me at a later time. There were no vulgar accusations on either side, and the words I read in the deed of separation, "incompatibility of temper"—a mere legal phrase—*more* than covered the ground. Truer still would have been "incompatibility of *occupation*," and the interference of well-meaning friends. We all suffer from that sort of thing. Pray God one be not a well-meaning friend one's self!

"The marriage was not a happy one," they will probably say after my death, but for me it was in many ways very happy indeed. What bitterness there was effaced itself in a very remarkable way.

I saw Mr Watts but once face to face after the separation. We met in the street at Brighton, and he told me that I had grown! That was the last time I spoke to him. But years later, after I had appeared at the

this, that they have never had a Charles Reade to give them a trouncing! Well, the letter begins with sheer eulogy. Eulogy is nice, but one does not learn anything from it. Had dear Charles Reade stopped after writing "womanly grace, subtlety, delicacy, the variety yet invariable truthfulness of the facial expression, compared with which the faces beside yours are wooden, uniform dolls," he would have done nothing to advance me in my art; but this was only the jam in which I was to take the powder! Here followed more jam—with the first taste of the powder:

I prefer you for my Philippa to any other actress, and shall do so still, even if you will not, or cannot, throw more vigour into the lines that need it. I do not pretend to be as good a writer of plays as you are an actress, but I do pretend to be a great judge of acting in general. And I know how my own lines and business ought to be rendered infinitely better than any one else, except the Omniscient. It is only on this narrow ground I presume to teach a woman of your gifts. If I teach you Philippa, you will teach me Juliet; for I am very sure that when I have seen you act her, I shall know a vast deal more about her than I do at present.

No great quality of an actress is absent from your performance. Very often you have *vigour*. But in other places where it is as much required, or even more, you turn *limp*. You have limp lines, limp business, and in Act III limp exits instead of ardent exits.

Except in the actual word used, he was perfectly right. I was not *limp*, but I was exhausted. By a natural instinct, I had produced my voice scientifically almost from the first, and I had found out for myself many things, which in these days of Delasarte systems and the science of voice-production, are taught. But when, after my six years' absence from the stage, I came back, and played a long and arduous part, I found that my breathing was still not right. This accounted for my exhaustion, or limpness and lack of vigour, as Charles Reade preferred to call it. As for the "ardent" exits, how right he was! That word set me on the track of learning the value of moving off the stage with a swift rush. I had always had the gift of being rapid in movement, but to *have* a gift, and to *use* it, are two very different things.

I never realised that I was rather quick in movement until one day when I was sitting on a sofa talking to the famous throat specialist, Dr Morell Mackenzie. In the middle of one of his sentences I said: "Wait a minute while I get a glass of water." I was out of the room and back so soon that he said, "Well, go and get it then!" and was amazed when he saw that the glass was in my hand and that I was sitting down again!

Consider! That was one of Charles Reade's favourite expressions, and just hearing him say the word used to make me consider, and think, and

Climax is reached not only by rush but by increasing pace. Your exit speech is a failure at present, because you do not vary the pace of its delivery. Get by yourself for one half-hour—if you can! Get by the seaside, if you can,

I remember that I never could see that he was right about that, and if I can't see a thing I can't do it. The author's idea must become mine before I can carry it out—at least, with any sincerity, and obedience with-out sincerity would be of small service to an author. It must be despairing to him, if he wants me to say a line in a certain way, to find that I always say it in another; but I can't help it. I have tried to act passages as I have been told, just *because* I was told and without conviction, and I have failed miserably and have had to go back to my own way.

"Now, James—for England and liberty!"
The last passage of the third act is just a little too hurried. Break the line.

A truer word was never spoken. It has never been in my power to *sustain*. In private life, I cannot sustain a hatred or a resentment. On the stages, I can pass swiftly from one effect to another, but I cannot fix *one*, and dwell on it, with that superb concentration which seems to me the special attribute of the tragic actress. To sustain, with me, is to lose the impression that I have created, not to increase its intensity.

After the beating, wait at least ten seconds longer than you do—to rouse expectation—and when you do come on, make a little more of it. You ought to be very pale indeed—even to enter with a slight totter, done moderately, of course; and before you say a single word, you ought to stand shaking and with your brows knitting, looking almost terrible. Of course, I do not expect or desire to make a melo-dramatic actress of you, but still I think you capable of any effect, provided *it is not sustained too long*.

Yes, I remember that in both these situations I used to muddle and blur the effect by doing the business and speaking at the same time. By acting on Kade's suggestion I gained confidence in making a pause.

When you come to tell old Surefoot about his daughter's love, the letter goes on, you should fall into a positive imitation of his manner: crest motion-less, and hands in front, and deliver your preambles with a nasal twang. But at the second invitation to speak out, you should cast this to the winds, and go into the other extreme of bluntness and rapidity. When you meet him after the exposure, you should speak as you are coming to him and stop him in mid-career, and *then* attack him. You should also (in Act II) get the pearls back into the tree before you say: "Oh, I hope he did not see me!"

They did! And I recommend them to any one who finds it hard to overcome monotony of pace and languor of diction.

during the tours of the Drawing-Room Entertainment, Ellen Terry does not mention that she played parts in some of the little pieces in the programme.

6. *Those large hands.* It may well astonish readers who are old enough to remember Ellen Terry that she should ever have been ashamed of her hands. But perhaps they were not so beautiful in youth before she had learned how to use them. Apropos of this speculation, I quote Bernard Shaw's opinion that "Ellen Terry actually invented her own beauty. Her portraits as a girl have hardly anything in them of the wonderful woman who, after leaving the stage for seven years, re-appeared in 1875 and took London by storm."

7. *Mr Godwin.* The first allusion in Ellen Terry's autobiography to "Mr Godwin" (Edward William Godwin, F.S.A.) calls for amplification. It is strange that there is no biography of this brilliant man, who besides being an architect of distinction in the British school which broke away from the pseudo-classic style of the early 19th century period, was a learned archæologist, a pioneer in the reform of domestic furniture and decoration, and the initiator of an æsthetic movement in the theatre which was destined to have a lasting influence. One of the greatest services rendered by Gordon Craig's organ *The Mask*, a journal devoted to the art of the theatre, now deceased, was the reprint in 1908 of Godwin's valuable series of articles on "The Architecture and Costumes of Shakespeare's Plays" which originally appeared in "The Architect" in 1875. The time has come to reprint them once more for the instruction of a generation entirely ignorant of the debt the theatre owes to Godwin.

His career can be only briefly summarised here. Born in Bristol in 1833, he was little more than a boy when he won the three premiums in the competitions for designs for the assize-courts in his native town. At the age of twenty-five he built the Town Hall at Northampton. Another important architectural achievement is the Town Hall at Congleton. Of the many houses Godwin built, the White House in Chelsea, designed for his friend Whistler, is best known. In lending his talents to the service of the theatre Godwin had precursors in the great architects, Serlio, Palladio and Inigo Jones. His wide learning and keen perception of beauty made him dissatisfied both with the archæological and æsthetic standards of production in the theatre of his youth. He expressed some of this dissatisfaction in the criticisms of the productions at Bristol to which Ellen Terry refers.

After Godwin left Bristol for London he continued to practise his profession as architect, but from the year 1875 when he supervised the Bancrofts' production of "The Merchant of Venice" (in which Ellen Terry played Portia) his work for the theatre engrossed him. Its extent is not to be measured by the actual number of productions in which he collaborated. He prepared scene and costume designs for many other plays, and was a prolific writer of articles on his special subject, archæology in relation to the theatre. His most notable achievement was the production of "Helena in Troas" at Hengler's Circus in 1886. He designed and built a theatre on the Greek model within the existing structure, and applied his detailed knowledge of the past to the reconstruction of a Greek performance. A contemporary picture of this production, in which

The brilliant story of the Bancroft management of the old Prince of Wales's Theatre was more familiar twenty years ago than it is now. I think that few of the youngest playgoers who point out, on the first nights of important productions, a remarkably striking figure of a man with erect carriage, white hair, and flashing dark eyes—a man whose eye-glass, manners, and clothes all suggest Thackeray and Major Pendennis, in spite of his success in keeping abreast of everything modern—few playgoers, I say, who point this man out as Sir Squire Bancroft could give any adequate account of what he did for the English theatre in the

§ 2

And I, looking at that splendid head, those wonderful hands, the whole strange beauty of him, thought, "Ah, you little know!"

For an actor who can't walk, can't talk, and has no face to speak of, I've with no equipment. My legs, my voice—everything has been against me—have made the reputation I have as an actor, with nothing to help me—"I was thinking," he answered slowly, "how strange it is that I should half despairing, asked him what he was thinking about.

many pictures a minute—and being struck by a curious look, half puzzled, day in the train—always a delightful occupation, for his face provided time when he was at the highest point of his fame, I watched him one no more to do. Once when I was touring with him in America, at the He never rested on old triumphs, never found a part in which there was up to the last five years of his life, Henry Irving was striving, striving. Only a great actor finds the difficulties of the actor's art infinite. Even comfort to himself and success with the audience.

new part to him, he tried the experiment, and, as he told me, with great next play, "The Lady of Lyons"; but when it came to Shylock, a quite habit of doing. He did not heed me then, nor during the run of our the audience if I stood at the wing for ten minutes, as he was in the child, I should be paralysed with fright from over-acute realisation of which I had gained through having been on the stage when still a mere from the dressing-room. I told him that, in spite of the advantage in ease self-consciousness; and I suggested a more swift entrance on the stage Queen's, he used to discuss with me the secret of my freedom from acted together after that long-ago Katharine and Petruchio period at the what the shell is to a lobster on dry land. In "Hamlet," when we first used to hamper and incommode him. His *self* was to him on a first night vowels, and the self-consciousness which in the early stages of his career and he overcame this defect, just as he overcame his difficulty with

Sir Herbert Tree (who years afterwards acknowledged Godwin as his master) appeared as Paris, suggests that it was quite as remarkable for its beauty as for its accuracy. Godwin died in the autumn of the same year at the age of 53.

Ellen Terry is reticent about the character and personality of the man who, seven years after their first meeting at Bristol, was to bring about the great change in her life, which alienated her from her family, and interrupted her career as an actress for the second time. The reticence is natural. We may respect it, and yet wish ardently that Ellen Terry's genius for flashing down vivid impressions of people had been exercised on Edward Godwin. His contemporaries who wrote about him after his premature death are more eloquent about what he did than about what he was. There are a few faint indications in these obituary notices. "He was learned without having a particle of the Dryasdust about him." "He assumed an air of superiority at times, but he found many who willingly recognised his right to it." "He was a friend of Whistler's, of Sandys's and of Swinburne's, and had a singular fascination for those whom he cared to please." "On a foreign tour he was a delightful companion." "His pale ascetic face, rather resembling that of Cardinal Manning." "A picturesque figure." Those scraps help us to visualise Godwin in 1886. But we should like to see him as he was in 1863, to have a picture of the successful young architect, with his penetrating brown eyes set wide apart, teaching fair-haired little Nelly Terry how to "wring" a dress, discoursing the while, perhaps, on his theories of beauty on the stage. There is an interesting piece of evidence that Godwin had tried to interest little Nelly's first manager Charles Kean in these theories, in a letter to him from Kean, which Ellen Terry preserved. The letter had another interest for her. Godwin had seen her as a child in the part of Puck.

10 March 1858.

MY DEAR MR GODWIN:

Many thanks for your kind offer. I shall stick pretty nearly to Macbeth with some slight alterations of the old scenery... but I am sure Mr Grieve will be always glad to see you, and I shall always be glad to hear you have been seen. I send you a ticket for "The Corsicans"¹ and another for the last night of "The Midsummer"² and the Pantomime. Sincerely yours,

C. KEAN

It is not clear whether by the "mistress" of Godwin's beautiful house in Portland Square, Bristol, Ellen Terry means Godwin's first wife (Sara Young) or the sister who kept house for him after the wife's death. As she died within a few months of the marriage (to the strains of a Prelude by Bach which her husband played on the organ to her at her request) it seems more probable that Ellen Terry is referring to Miss Godwin.

8. *The Marriage to Mr Watts*. "We have to announce the marriage of Miss Ellen Alice Terry, the pleasing young actress who was lately a member of the Haymarket Company. The ceremony was performed on Saturday, the 20th

¹ "The Corsican Brothers."

² "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

many dramatic features, but my memory, either because it is bad or because it is good, corrects my imagination.

"May I come in?"

An ordinary remark, truly, to stick in one's head for thirty-odd years! But it was made in such a *very* pretty voice—one of the most silvery voices I have ever heard from any woman except the late Queen Victoria, whose voice was like a silver stream flowing over golden stones.

The smart little figure—Mrs Bancroft was, above all things, *petite*—dressed in black—elegant Parisian black—came into a room which had been almost completely stripped of furniture. The floor was covered with Japanese matting, and at one end was a cast of the Venus of Milo, almost the same colossal size as the original.

Mrs Bancroft's wonderful grey eyes examined it curiously. The room, the statue, and I myself must all have seemed very strange to her. I wore a dress of some deep yellow woollen material which my little daughter used to call the "frog dress," because it was speckled with brown like a frog's skin. It was cut like a *Viollette-Duc* tabard, and had not a trace of the fashion of the time. Mrs Bancroft, however, did not look at me less kindly because I wore æsthetic clothes and was painfully thin. She explained that they were going to put on "*The Merchant of Venice*" at the Prince of Wales's, that she was to rest for a while for reasons connected with her health; that she and Mr Bancroft had thought of me for *Portia*. *Portia*! It seemed too good to be true! I was a student when I was young. I knew not only every word of the part, but every detail of that period of Venetian splendour in which the action of the play takes place. I had studied *Vecellio*.

Mrs Bancroft told me that the production would be as beautiful as money and thought could make it. The artistic side of the venture was to be in the hands of Mr Godwin.

"Well, what do you say?" said Mrs Bancroft. "Will you put your shoulder to the wheel with us?"

I answered incoherently and joyfully, that of all things, I had been wanting most to play in *Shakespeare*; that in *Shakespeare* I had always felt I would play for half the salary; that—oh, I don't know what I said! Probably it was all very foolish and unbusinesslike, but the engagement was practically settled before Mrs Bancroft left the house, although I was charged not to say anything about it yet.

But theatre secrets are generally *secrets de polichinelle*. When I went to Charles Reader's house at Albert Gate on the following Sunday for one of his regular Sunday parties, he came up to me at once with a knowing look and said:

"So you've got an engagement."

inst., at the church of St Barnabas, Kensington, by the Rev Dr Hussey, and the name of the gentleman with whom the lady has become united in the bonds of matrimony is Mr G. F. Watts."

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The moment G. F. Watts clapped eyes on that "ideal" face, he seems to have recognised his ideal of an inspiring model. Like the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria, on a somewhat similar occasion, he turned from the elder sister, who was already in Tom Taylor's imagination the future Mrs Watts, to the younger. The marriage was arranged and all too shortly took place. It is not known whether the elderly artist, elderly that is in comparison with his bride—he was more than twice her age—felt any compunction at the innocent rapture of Ellen Terry at the prospect of living with him at Little Holland House. His first marriage is not even mentioned in his biography, a strange omission, hardly justified by the fact that his biographer was his second wife. But the conjecture that he had an uneasy conscience is reasonable. The late Lady Constance Leslie, who was present at the wedding, once told me that the contrast between the atrabilious bridegroom, walking slowly and heavily up the aisle, and the radiant child bride dancing up it on winged feet, struck her as painful. She recalled the lines:

Crabbed age and youth
Cannot live together
Youth is full of pleasaunce:
Age is full of care.

Apparently neither Tom Taylor, who had the interests of little Nelly at heart, nor her parents, who adored her, were as sensitive. They pleased that the child had made such a good marriage. As stage folk they have regretted the abrupt termination of a career so full of promise, but is no proof of this.

Sir Herbert Tree (who years afterwards acknowledged Godwin as his master) appeared as Paris, suggests that it was quite as remarkable for its beauty as for its accuracy. Godwin died in the autumn of the same year at the age of 53.

Ellen Terry is reticent about the character and personality of the man who, seven years after their first meeting at Bristol, was to bring about the great change in her life, which alienated her from her family, and interrupted her career as an actress for the second time. The reticence is natural. We may respect it, and yet wish ardently that Ellen Terry's genius for flashing down vivid impressions of people had been exercised on Edward Godwin. His contemporaries who wrote about him after his premature death are more eloquent about what he did than about what he was. There are a few faint indications in these obituary notices. "He was learned without having a particle of the Dryasdust about him." "He assumed an air of superiority at times, but he found many who willingly recognised his right to it." "He was a friend of Whistler's, of Sandys's and of Swinburne's, and had a singular fascination for those whom he cared to please." "On a foreign tour he was a delightful companion." "His pale ascetic face, rather resembling that of Cardinal Manning." "A picturesque figure." Those scraps help us to visualise Godwin in 1886. But we should like to see him as he was in 1863, to have a picture of the successful young architect, with his penetrating brown eyes set wide apart, teaching fair-haired little Nelly Terry how to "wring" a dress, discoursing the while, perhaps, on his theories of beauty on the stage. There is an interesting piece of evidence that Godwin had tried to interest little Nelly's first manager Charles Kean in these theories, in a letter to him from Kean, which Ellen Terry preserved. The letter had another interest for her. Godwin had seen her as a child in the part of Puck.

10 March 1858.

MY DEAR MR GODWIN:

Many thanks for your kind offer. I shall stick pretty nearly to Macbeth with some slight alterations of the old scenery... but I am sure Mr Grieve will be always glad to see you, and I shall always be glad to hear you have been seen. I send you a ticket for "The Corsicans"¹ and another for the last night of "The Midsummer"² and the Pantomime. Sincerely yours,

C. KEAN

It is not clear whether by the "mistress" of Godwin's beautiful house in Portland Square, Bristol, Ellen Terry means Godwin's first wife (Sara Young) or the sister who kept house for him after the wife's death. As she died within a few months of the marriage (to the strains of a Prelude by Bach which her husband played on the organ to her at her request) it seems more probable that Ellen Terry is referring to Miss Godwin.

8. *The Marriage to Mr Watts*. "We have to announce the marriage of Miss Ellen Alice Terry, the pleasing young actress who was lately a member of the Haymarket Company. The ceremony was performed on Saturday, the 20th

¹ "The Corsican Brothers."

² "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

I HAVE read in some of the biographies of me that have been published from time to time, that I was chagrined at Coghlan's fiasco because it brought my success as Portia so soon to an end. As a matter of fact, I never thought about it. I was just sorry for clever Coghlan, who was deeply hurt and took his defeat hardly and moodily. He wiped out the public recollection of it to a great extent by his Evelyn in "Money," his Sir Charles Romander in "Masks and Faces," and his Claude Melnotte in "The Lady of Lyons," which he played with me at the Princess's Theatre

§ 3

The audiences may have been scanty, but they were wonderful. O'Shaughnessy, Watts-Dunton, Oscar Wilde, Alfred Gilbert, and, I think, Swinburne were there. A poetic and artistic atmosphere pervaded the front of the house as well as the stage itself.

hold your talents from their proper sphere." "I had always hoped she might be. I hope that I shall see you again in other Shakespearean characters, and that nothing will tempt you to withhold your favours, and I write to offer you my poor thanks. Portia has always been my favourite heroine, and I saw her last night as sweet and lovely of receiving must always be worth doing. You have given me that but to give to human beings the greatest pleasure that they are capable of playing to such houses," he wrote, "is not an encouraging pursuit; about "The Merchant of Venice" from some unknown friend.

There turns up today, out of a long-neglected box, a charming note have been stronger, if they *had* been able to help it. simple truth. I, for one, should have been poorer, though my eyes might begin: "I cannot help writing to tell you," and I believe that this is the complaint of it. To some people expression is life itself. Half my letters filled me can never be destroyed. The task of reading and answering ago, but the feeling of sweetness and light with which some of them known and unknown. Most of the letters written to me I destroyed long Every one seemed to be in love with me! I had sweethearts by the dozen, Short as the run of the play was, it was a wonderful time for me. nothing came of it.

Fredrick Leighton and others made the proposal to the Bancrofts, but Sir Fredrick and Lady Pollock, James Spedding, Edwin Arnold, Sir going by subscription, as the general public was not supporting them. tion which took the practical form of an offer to keep the performances the Bancrofts' production of "The Merchant of Venice" with an apprecia- deal of true enthusiasm for anything beautiful. It made people welcome

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floundering out of your depths tonight on the subject of butterflies! The man to whom you were talking is one of the greatest entomologists in Europe, and must have seen through you at once."

When William Black's "Madcap Violet" was published, common report said that the heroine had been drawn from Ellen Terry, and some of the reviews made Taylor furious.

"It's disgraceful! I shall deny it. Never will I let it be said of you that you could conceive any vulgarity. I shall write and contradict it. Indiscreet, high-spirited, full of surprises, you may be, but vulgar—never! I shall write at once."

"Don't do that," I said. "Can't you see that the author hasn't described me, but only men in 'New Men and Old Acres'?" As this was Tom Taylor's own play, his rage against "Madcap Violet" was very funny! "There am I, just as you wrote it. My actions, manners, and clothes in the play are all reproduced. You ought to feel pleased, not angry."

When his play "Victims" was being rehearsed at the Court Theatre, an old woman and old actress who had, I think, been in the preceding play was not wanted. The day the management gave her her dismissal, she met Taylor outside the theatre, and poured out a long story of distress. She had not a stocking to her foot, she owed her rent, she was starving. Wouldn't Mr Taylor tell the management what dismissal meant to her? Wouldn't he get her taken back? Mr Taylor would try, and Mr Taylor gave her fifteen pounds in the street then and there! Mrs Taylor wasn't surprised. She only wondered it wasn't thirty!

"Tom the Adapter" was the Terry dramatist for many years. Kate played in many of the pieces which, some openly, some deviously, he brought into the English theatre from the French. When Kate married, my turn came, and the interest that he had taken in my sister's talent he transferred in part to me, although I don't think he ever thought me her equal. Floss made her first appearance in the child's part in Taylor's play "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing," and Marion her first appearance as Ophelia in his version of "Hamlet"—perhaps "perversion" would be an honest description! Taylor introduced a "fool" who went about whacking people, including the Prince, by way of brightening up the tragedy. I never saw my sister's Ophelia, but I know it was a fine send-off for her and that she must have looked lovely. Oh, what a pretty young girl she was! Her golden-brown eyes exactly matched her hair, and she was the winsomest thing imaginable!

From Taylor's letters have forgotten—that the

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Ellen Terry, writing of her marriage to Watts in after years, says that in many ways it was a happy one. This was a generous exaggeration, very natural in a woman who on her own confession was always "incapable of sustaining a resentment." Mrs Watts, aged sixteen, may have been too young and flighty to be trusted with the usual prerogatives of a wife, but she was kept in a state of tutelage at Little Holland House, for which neither her youth nor her temperament provide an excuse. "The Signor," as Watts was called by his friends, was surrounded by a little court of married women of his own age, presided over by "Beauty" (Mrs Prinsep), who seem to have made it their business to keep his child-wife in order. She was subjected to a humiliating surveillance and had strict injunctions not to open her mouth in the presence of distinguished guests. No doubt Ellen Terry was a trial to the Signor and his court. The story that she once bounded into the room after a dinner-party at Little Holland House, dressed as Cupid (Cupids in those days were dressed, not undressed) may be apocryphal, but the girl who at Freshwater preferred larking with the young Tennysons to sitting sedately in the drawing-room listening to their father's conversation, is very likely to have incurred the displeasure of crabbed age by some such childish prank.

Nevertheless Mrs Watts appears to have been genuinely surprised and mortified when she found that Mr Watts wanted to get rid of her. She loved and admired him, was happy in his studio where she sat to him almost continuously during her brief married life, and was far too innocent to realise the situation. The exact incident which led to the separation was hushed up by the Little Holland House court. It was discreditable to the husband, not to the wife. That his treatment of her weighed heavily on his conscience is evident in the letters he wrote to her between the years 1882 and 1886. Generous again to a fault, Ellen Terry speaks of his "chivalrous assumption of blame." But there was no assumption about it. He knew he was to blame, and entreated her forgiveness. She exculpated him, but he never exculpated himself, although in one letter he expresses his gratitude that "I shall not carry out of the world the sense that any malediction will follow me now that you do not think unkindly of me."

This strange correspondence, begun after Ellen Terry's divorce and second marriage, proves among other things that Watts was astounded at the development of mental powers in his former wife, the existence of which he had never discerned in her youth. The writer of these wonderful letters to him was the girl he had thought should be seen not heard! She was seen by him to some purpose, let it be admitted. His pictures of her are among his best works, the only ones which have stood the test of time.

9. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter II were: Hector Melrose ("Home for the Holidays," 1859); Giles, Harry James, etc. ("Distant Relations," 1859); Mabel Valecrusis ("A Lesson for Life," 1860); Sarah Janes ("Nine Points of the Law," 1861); Puck ("Midsummer's Eve," 1861); Clementine ("Attar Gull," 1861); Sophia Steinbach ("All in the Dark," 1861); Rosetta ("A Thumping Legacy," 1861); Letty Briggs ("The Governor's Wife," 1861); Sophie Western ("Bamboozling,"

When Tom Taylor criticised acting he wrote as an expert, and he Enemies."

those who like mordant ridicule, in "The Gentle Art of Making controversy of which I forget the details, but they are all set out, for He put himself at the mercy of Whistler, once, in some Velasquez whose name, no doubt, will live longer.

age, and so was more prominent in it than Charles Reade, for instance, That was his weakness—if it was a weakness. He lived entirely for his his really fine accomplishment as a playwright for ever on adaptations. haps a man of more independence and ambition would not have wasted Taylor would not have condescended to "write up" Shakespeare; per-Polly as Ophelia. Perhaps a man with more acute literary conscience than actor who played that odd version of "Hamlet" at the Crystal Palace with Mazzini stayed there for some time, and Steele Mackaye, the American Lavender Sweep was a sort of house of call for every one of note.

laughed, and laughed! soft felt hat bashed over one eye, his spectacles broken, and laughed, and seemed to attribute our descent to rowdiness. Taylor stood up with his steps. "Now, then, none of your jokes!" said a cross man behind us, who on to one arm and I on to the other, we all three fell down the station Once, when we were rushing to catch a train with him, Kate hanging that it was possible for every one to have a good time.

Lavender Sweep arose from his generous, kindly nature, which insisted lovable a being to be great. The atmosphere of gaiety which pervaded think his heart was too strong for his brain. He was far too simple and Taylor did not write "so little." He wrote perhaps too much, and I answer.

"Ah, but then, Charles Lamb wrote so little!" was the remarkable for so many years.

Perhaps Charles Lamb was all the better for being a slave at the desk was never sure whether absolute freedom in such a matter *was* desirable, and devote herself entirely to a literary career. I wondered, and said I ing forward to the time when she would be able to give up teaching written some charming short stories, told me how eagerly she was look-all depends on the point of view. A young lady in Chicago, who has Lamb at East India House, and Rousseau copying music for bread? It achieving anything. What about Taylor at the Home Office, Charles living in some other and more secure profession hinders them from paper. Many would-be writers complain that the necessity of earning a realised that he was just as busy as if his pen had been plucking at his the time; and when I used to watch him plucking at his grey beard, I Taylor never wasted a moment. He pottered, but thought deeply all

1861); Clara ("Matrimony," 1861); Mabel ("A Lesson for Husbands," 1861); Mrs Brinstone ("A Nice Quiet Day," 1861); Florence ("A Chinese Honey-moon," 1862); Louisa Drayton ("Grandfather Whitehead," 1862); Clorinda ("A Family Failing," 1862); Margot ("The Sergeant's Wife," 1862); Sally Potts ("The Eton Boy," 1862); Kate Mapleton ("Nine Points of the Law," 1862); Cupid ("Endymion," 1862); Alice ("Marriage at any Price," 1862); Dictys ("Perseus and Andromeda," 1862); Marie ("The Marble Heart," 1862); Marguerite de Stormberg ("The Angel at Midnight," 1862); Gertrude Howard ("The Little Treasure," 1862); Serena ("Conrad and Medera," 1862); Fanny Fact ("Time Tries All," 1862); Spirit of the Future ("Opening Ceremony at the Theatre Royal, Bath," 1863); Titania ("A Midsummer Night's Dream," 1863); Britannia ("Buckstone at Home," 1863); Hero ("Much Ado About Nothing," 1863); Lady Frances Touchwood ("The Belle's Stratagem," 1863); Desdemona ("Othello," 1863); Mary Ford ("A Lesson for Life," 1863); Isabella ("A Game of Romps," 1863); Flora ("The Duke's Motto," 1863); Nerissa ("The Merchant of Venice," 1863); Constance Belmore ("One Touch of Nature," 1863); Julia Melville ("The Rivals," 1863); Sir Tristram ("King Arthur," 1863); Mary Meredith ("The American Cousin," 1863).

after her first appearance as Portia. There was never any question after this appearance that she was an actress of the first rank, yet many stage historians give the impression that her career before Henry Irving engaged her as his leading lady in 1878 was insignificant, and that it is improbable she would have achieved a great position apart from Irving. Ellen Terry, who never over-rated her successes, says that as Portia at the Prince of Wales's she had her first and last sense of "being lifted on high by a single stroke of the mighty wing of glory," and contemporary accounts of her triumph make the statement perfectly credible. Yet today Portia is reckoned a second-rate part, and if actresses fail to make much of it, Shakespeare is blamed. A Portia about whom poets, painters and scholars raved is inconceivable in 1932. A painter (Graham Robertson) writes that Ellen Terry was *par excellence* "the Painter's Actress," and appealed to the eye before the ear; her gesture and pose were eloquence itself. "Her charm held every one but I think pre-eminently those who loved pictures." This throws some light on the subjugation of the painters in the audience at the Prince of Wales's. The poets were probably entranced by hearing the true Shakespearean music. The scholars? Well, they may have been struck by the young actress's penetration into the meaning of the words behind the music. And all, ordinary play-going men and women as well as the artists, fell in love with the enchanting personality of the new Portia.

3. *The Private Life of Portia*. The house at which Mrs Bancroft called to offer Ellen Terry the part of Portia was in Tavilton Street. It had been decorated and furnished with great care by Edward Godwin, while Ellen Terry was on tour with Charles Reade, but by the date of Mrs Bancroft's visit, the brokers had made it a desert. In describing the interview with Mrs Bancroft, in her book, Ellen Terry forgot a little detail she always remembered when telling the story to her children. "When Mrs Bancroft saw the Venus, she ejaculated 'Dear me!' in her best comedy manner, and, really rather startled by the enormous size of the cast, made the farcically shocked gesture of putting her hand to her eyes."

It was at Tavilton Street that Ellen Terry's final breach with Edward Godwin occurred. Hence her allusion to domestic troubles. I have the authority of an old friend of Godwin's for the story that in "a fit of pique" he left the house, and soon afterwards married Miss Beatrice Phillips, one of his pupils, a young girl still at school. She was the daughter of John Bernie Phillips, the sculptor who executed the frieze on the podium of the Albert Memorial. There is further evidence of that self-confessed inability of Ellen Terry's to sustain a resentment, by which her first husband benefited, in her subsequent attitude towards Edward Godwin. Admiration for it remains unaffected by the consideration that there may have been faults on both sides. If Godwin was not "an easy person to live with," neither was Ellen Terry, as the history of her marriages proves. Writing to a friend of the Harpenden days she had met unexpectedly again after a twenty years' separation, she says: "The times, of which you were part, were my best times, my happiest times. I can never think of him but at his best, and when he died, he thought only

CHAPTER III

AN EARLY RETIREMENT

(1867-1868)

§ 1

Most people know that Tom Taylor was one of the leading playwrights of the 'sixties as well as the dramatic critic of *The Times*, editor of *Punch*, and a distinguished Civil Servant, but to us he was more than this. He was an institution! I simply cannot remember when I did not know him. It is the Tom Taylors of the world who give children on the stage their splendid education. We never had any education in the strict sense of the word, yet through the Taylors and others, we *were* educated. Their house in Lavender Sweep was lovely. I can hardly bear to go near that part of London now, it is so horribly changed. Where are its green fields and its chestnut-trees? We were always welcome at the Taylors', and every Sunday we heard music and met interesting people—Charles Reade among them. Mrs Taylor had rather a hard outside—she was like Mrs Charles Kean in that respect—and I was often frightened out of my life by her; yet I adored her. She was in reality the most tender-hearted, sympathetic woman, and what an admirable musician! She composed nearly all the music for her husband's plays. Every Sunday there was music at Lavender Sweep, quartet playing, and Clara Schumann at the piano.

Tom Taylor was one of the most benign and gentle of men, a good and loyal friend. At first he was more interested in my sister Kate's career than in mine, as was only natural; for, up to the time of my first marriage, Kate had a present, I, only a future. Before we went to Bristol and played with the stock company, she had made her name. At the St James's Theatre, in 1862, she was playing a small part in a version of Sardou's "Nos Intimes," known then as "Friends and Foes," and in a later day and in another version as "Peril."

Miss Herbert—the beautiful Miss Herbert, as she was appropriately called—had the chief part in the play (Mrs Union), and Kate, although not the understudy, was called upon to play it at a few hours' notice. She had from childhood acquired a habit of studying every part in every play

still adheres to this standard, would do well to ponder Ellen Terry's words: "Surely the world is always the better for having a little truth instead of a great deal of falsehood."

4. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter V were: Portia ("The Merchant of Venice," 1875); Clara Douglas ("Money," 1875); Mrs Honeyton ("A Happy Pair," 1875); Pauline ("The Lady of Lyons," 1875); Mabel Vane ("Masks and Faces," 1875).

The tortoisés, bought to eat the beetles, had been eaten themselves. At least, the shells were found full of beetles.

And the armadillos? "The air of Chelsea don't suit them," said Rossetti's servant. They had certainly left Rossetti's house, but they had not left Chelsea. All the neighbours had dozens of them! They had burrowed, and came up smiling in houses where they were far from well-come.

This, by the way, Miss Herbert, who looked like the Blessed Damsel leaning out "across the bar of heaven," was not very well suited to the line of parts that she was playing at the St James's, but she was very much admired. During the run of "Friends and Foes" she fell ill. Her illness was Kate's opportunity. From the night that Kate played Mrs Union, her reputation was made.

It was a splendid chance, no doubt, but of what use would it have been to any one who was not ready to use it? Kate, though only about nineteen at this time, was a finished actress. She had been a perfect Ariel, a beautiful Cordelia, and had played at least forty other parts of importance since she had appeared as a tiny Robin in the Kean's production of "The Merry Wives of Windsor." She had not had her head turned by big salaries, and she had never ceased working since she was four years old. No wonder that she was capable of bearing the burden of a piece at a moment's notice. The Americans cleverly say that "the lucky cat *watches*;" I should add that the lucky cat *works*. Reputations on the stage—at any rate, enduring reputations—are not made by chance, and to an actress who has not worked hard the finest opportunity in the world will be utterly useless.

Kate's acting, unlike that of Adelaide Neilsen, who was the great popular favourite before Kate came to the front, was scientific. She knew what she was about. There was more idealism than passionate womanliness in her interpretations. For this reason, perhaps, her Cordelia was finer than her Portia or her Beatrice.

She was engaged at one time to a young actor, called Montagu. If the course of that love affair had run smooth, where should I have been? Kate would have been the Terry of the age. But Mr Montagu went to America, and, after five years of life as a matinee idol, died there. Before that, Arthur Lewis had come along. I was glad because he was rich, and during his courtship of my sister I had some riding, of which in my girlhood I was passionately fond.

Tom Taylor had an enormous admiration for Kate, and during her second season as a "star" at Bristol he came down to see her play Juliet and Beatrice and Portia.

From Bristol my sister went to London to become Fechter's "leading

badly about it, all the more because of the ill-natured stories of its being no accident.

Miss Marie Tempest is perhaps the actress of the present day who reminds me a little of what Mrs Bancroft was at the Prince of Wales's, but neither nature nor art succeed in producing two actresses exactly alike. At her best Mrs Bancroft was unapproachable. I think that the best thing I ever saw her do was the farewell to the boy in "Sweethearts." It was exquisite!

In "Masks and Faces" Taylor and Reade had collaborated, and the exact share of each in the result was left to one's own discernment. I remember saying to Taylor one night at dinner when Reade was sitting opposite me, that I wished he (Taylor) would write me a part like that. "If only I could have an original part like Peg!"

Charles Reade, after fixing me with his amused and *very* glittering eye, said across the table: "I have something for your private ear, Madam, after this repast!" And he came up *with* the ladies, sat by me, and, calling me "an artful toad"—a favourite expression of his for me!—told me that *he*, Charles Reade and no other, had written every line of Peg, and that I ought to have known it. I *didn't* know, as a matter of fact, but perhaps it was stupid of me. There was more of Tom Taylor in Mabel Vane.

I played five parts in all at the Prince of Wales's, and I think I may claim that the Bancrofts found me a *useful* actress—ever the height of my ambition! They wanted Byron—the author of "Our Boys"—to write me a part in the new play, which they had ordered from him, but when "Winkles" turned up there was no part which they felt they could offer me, and I think Coghlan was also not included in the cast. At any rate, he was free to take me to see Henry Irving act. Coghlan was always raving about Irving at this time. He said that one evening spent in watching him act was the best education an actor could have. Seeing other people act, even if they are not Irvings, is always an education to us. I have never been to a theatre yet without learning something. It must have been in the spring of 1876 that I received this note:

Will you come in our box on Tuesday for Queen Mary? Ever yours,
CHARLES T. COGHLAN.

I accepted the invitation. I saw Irving's King Philip. Well, I can only say that he never did anything better to the day of his death. Never shall I forget his expression and manner when Miss Bareman, as Queen Mary (she was *very* good, by the way), was pouring out her heart to him. The horrid, dead look, the cruel unresponsiveness,

lady," and from that time until she made her last appearance in 1867 as Juliet at the Adelphi, her career was a blaze of triumph.

§ 2

It was about this time that I paid my first visit to Paris. I saw the Empress Eugénie driving in the Bois, looking like an exquisite wax-work. Oh, the beautiful *slope* of women at this period! They looked like lovely half-moons, lying back in their carriages. It was an age of elegance—in France particularly—an age of luxury. They had just laid down asphalt for the first time in the streets of Paris, and the quiet of the boulevards was wonderful after the rattling London streets. I often went to three parties a night; but I was in a difficult position, as I could not speak a word of the language. I met Tissot, and Gambard, who had just built Rosa Bonheur a house at Nice.

I liked the Frenchmen because they liked me, but I didn't admire them.

I tried to learn to smoke, but I never took kindly to it and soon gave it up.

What was the thing that made me homesick for London? *Household Words*! The excitement in the 'sixties over each issue of this journal in which Dickens's novels were published serially can be understood only by people who experienced it at the time. Boys used to sell *Household Words* in the streets, and they were often pursued by an eager crowd, for all the world as if they were carrying news of the "latest winner."

Of course I went to the theatre in Paris. I saw Sarah Bernhardt for the first time, and Madame Favart, Croisette, Delaunay, and Got. I never thought Croisette—a superb animal—a "patch" on Sarah, who was at this time as thin as a harrow. Even then I recognised that Sarah was not a bit conventional, and would not stay long at the Comédie. Yet she did not put me out of conceit with the old school. I saw "Les Précieuses Ridicules" finely done, and I said to myself then, as I have often said since: "Old school—new school? What does it matter which, so long as it is *good enough*?"

Madame Favart I knew personally, and she gave me many useful hints. One was never to black my eyes *underneath* when "making up." She pointed out that although this was necessary when the stage was lighted entirely from beneath, it had become ugly and meaningless since the introduction of top lights.

The friend who took me everywhere in Paris landed me one night in the dressing-room of a singer. I remember it because I heard her com-

When I went with Coghlan to see Henry Irving's Philip I was no stranger to his acting. I had been present with Tom Taylor at the famous first night at the Lyceum in 1874, when Henry Irving put his fortune, counted not in gold, but in years of scorned delights and laborious days—years of constant study and reflection, of Spartan self-denial, and deep melancholy—I was present when he put it all to the touch "to win or lose it all." This is no exaggeration. Hamlet was by far the greatest part that he had ever played, or was ever to play. If he had failed—but why pursue it? He could not fail.

Yet the success on the first night at the Lyceum in 1874 was not of that electrical kind which has greeted the momentous achievements of some actors. The first two acts were received with indifference. The people could not see how packed they were with superb acting—perhaps because the new Hamlet was so simple, so quiet, so free from the exhibition of actors' artifices which used to bring down the house in "Louis XI" and in "Richelieu," but which were really the *easy* things in acting, and in "Richelieu" (in my opinion) not especially well done. In "Hamlet" Henry Irving did not go to the audience. He made them come to him. Slowly but surely attention gave place to admiration, admiration to enthusiasm, enthusiasm to triumphant acclaim.

I have seen many Hamlets—Fechter, Charles Kean, Rossi, Frederick Haas, Forbes-Robertson, and my own son, Gordon Craig, among them—but they were not in the same hemisphere! I refuse to go and see Hamlets now. I want to keep Henry Irving's fresh and clear in my memory until I die.

When he engaged me to play Ophelia in 1878 he asked me to go down to Birmingham to see the play, and that night I saw what I shall always consider the *perfection* of acting. This Hamlet had been wonderful in 1874. In 1878 it was far more wonderful. It has been said that when Henry Irving has "advantage" of my Ophelia, his Hamlet "improved." I don't think so. He was always independent of the people

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Mr Labouchere was behind them, controlling their policy. Miss Henrietta Hodson, whom he afterwards married, played in the burlesques and farces without which no theatre bill in London at that time was complete. The Wigans offered me an engagement, and I stayed with them until 1868, when I again left the stage. During this engagement I acted with Charles Wyndham and Lionel Brough, and, last, but not least, with Henry Irving.

Mrs Wigan, *née* Leonora Pincott, did me the honour to think that I was worth teaching, and took nearly as much pains to improve me as Mrs Kean had done at a different stage in my artistic growth. Her own accomplishments as a comedy actress impressed me more than I can say. I remember seeing her as Mrs Candour, and thinking to myself, "This is absolutely perfect." If I were a teacher I would impress on young actresses never to move a finger or turn the eye without being quite certain that the movement or the glance *tells* something. Mrs Wigan made few gestures, but each one quietly, delicately indicated what the words which followed expressed. And while she was speaking she never frittered away the effect of that silent eloquence.

One of my besetting sins was—nay, still is—the lack of repose. Mrs Wigan at once detected this fault, and at rehearsals would work to make me remedy it. "*Stand still!*" she would shout from the stalls. "Now you're of value!" "Motionless! Just as you are! *That's* right."

Ten years later she came to see me at the Court Theatre, where I was playing in "The House of Darnley," and afterwards wrote me the following very kind and encouraging letter:

December 7, 1877.

DEAR MISS TERRY,—

You have a very difficult part in 'The House of Darnley.' I know no one who could play it as well as you did last night—but *you* could do it much better. You would vex me much if I thought you had no ambition in your art. You are the one young actress of my day who can have her success entirely in her own hands. You have all the gifts for your noble profession, and, as you know, your own devotion to it will give you all that can be learned. I'm very glad my stage direction was useful and pleasant to you, and any benefit you have derived from it is overpaid by your style of acting. You cannot have a 'groove'; you are too much of an artist. Go on and prosper, and if at any time you think I can help you in your art, you may always count on that help from your most sincere well-wisher

LEONORA WIGAN.

Another service that Mrs Wigan did me was to cure me of "fooling" on the stage. "*Did she?*", I think I hear some one interrupt me unkindly at this point! Well, at any rate, she gave me a good fright one night, and

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The Birmingham night he knew I was there. He played—I say it without vanity—for me. We players are not above that weakness, if it be a weakness. If ever anything inspires us to do our best it is the presence in the audience of some fellow-artist who must in the nature of things know more completely than any one what we intend, what we do, what we feel. The response from such a member of the audience flies across the footlights to us like a flame. I felt it once when I played Olivia

ONE very foggy night in December 1867—it was Boxing Day, I think—I acted for the first time with Henry Irving. This was a great event in my life, but at the time it passed me by and left “no wrack behind.” Ever anxious to improve on the truth, which is often devoid of all sensationism, people have told a story of Henry Irving promising that if he ever were in a position to offer me an engagement I should be his leading lady. The latest tale of our first meeting was told during my jubilee. Then, to my amazement, I read that on that famous night when I was playing Puck at the Princess’s, and caught my toe in the trap, “a young man with dark hair and a white face rushed forward from the crowd of supers and said: ‘Never mind, darling. Don’t cry! One day you will be queen of the stage.’ It was Henry Irving!”

In view of these legends, I ought to assert all the more stoutly that, until I went to the Lyceum Theatre, Henry Irving was nothing to me and I nothing to him. I never consciously thought that he would become a

§ 3

“Any lady ‘ere of that name?”

“No.”

“Well, I think she’s married, and changed her name, but she’s ‘ere right enough. Tell ‘er I won’t keep ‘er a minute. I’m ‘er bloody old father!”

for Leonora Pincoff.

This fondness for aristocratic society gave additional spice to the story that one day a blue-eyed old cabman in capes and muffler descended from the box of a disreputable-looking growler, and inquired at the stage-door.

Dear old Mrs Wigan! The stories that have been told about her would fill a book! She was exceedingly plain, rather like a toad, yet, perversely, she was more vain of her looks than of her acting. In the theatre she gave herself great airs and graces, and outside it hobnobbed with duchesses and princesses.

stagebox. I was simply paralysed with terror.

out her threat. The very next time we laughed a loud hiss rose from the said if we did it again, she would go in front and hiss us, and she carried ter. We hung on to chairs, helpless, limp, and incapable. Mrs. Wigan It’s *bine!*” The very thought of it used to send us off into fits of laughing a mere child myself, and with a bad cold in my head too, answering Wyndham. He had a line, “Whose child is this?” and there was I, looked absurdly young. There was one “curtain” which used to convulse As Rose de Beaurepaire, I wore a white muslin Directoire dress and was in “The Double Marriage,” the first play put on at the New Queen’s. I never forgot it, though I will not say I never fooled again. I think it

His advice to the players was not advice. He did not speak it as an actor. Nearly all Hamlets in that scene give away the fact that they are actors, and not dilettanti of royal blood. Irving defined the way he would have the players speak as an *order*, an instruction of the merit of which he was regally sure. There was no patronising flavour in his acting here, not a touch of "I'll teach you how to do it." He was swift—swift and simple—pausing for the right word now and again, as in the phrase "to

Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

And all that he tried to make others do with these lines, he himself did with every line of his own part. Every word lived. Some said: "Oh, Irving only makes Hamlet a love poem!" They said that, I suppose, because in the Nunnery scene with Ophelia he was the lover above the prince and the poet. With what passionate longing his hands hovered over Ophelia at her words:

Bernardo: 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.
Francisco: For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold . . .

Bernardo: He.
Francisco: Bernardo?
Bernardo: Long live the King!
Francisco: Nay, answer me; stand, and unfold yourself.
Bernardo: Who's there?

"We must start this play a living thing," he used to say at rehearsals, and he worked until the skin grew tight over his face, until he became livid with fatigue, yet still beautiful, to get the opening lines said with individuality, suggestiveness, speed, and power.

The play's the thing
With which to catch the conscience of the King,
and, as the curtain came down, was seen to be writing madly on his tablets against one of the pillars.

said:
The hair looked blue-black, like the plumage of a crow; the eyes burning—two fires veiled as yet by melancholy. But the appearance of the man was not single, straight or obvious, as it is when I describe it—any more than his passions throughout the play were. I only remember one moment when his intensity concentrated itself in a straightforward unmistakable emotion, without side-current or back-water. It was when he piled by Dr Pinches (Henry Irving's old schoolmaster). Yet how right to have taken it, to have been indifferent to its humble origin! Nothing could have been better when translated into life by Irving's genius.

with Kate Terry, he was well known in musical and artistic circles. His house, 3. *Arthur Lewis*. At the time Arthur Lewis "came along" and fell in love by any artist belonging to it.

centence, "Time Was," says that she was "the accepted type of the Pre-Raphaelite school," and comments on the strangeness of her never having been painted not nearly floppy enough." Yet Graham Robertson in his book of reminiscences the Pre-Raphaelites liked. "Too largely built, too vigorous, too Norse. In fact whom I put the question answered that Ellen Terry was not really the type people have asked. Why did Rossetti never paint Ellen Terry? An artist to her reference to Miss Herbert, invites a brief allusion to a question many 2. *Rossetti*. Ellen Terry's digression to Rossetti, into which she was led by morning made the name of Kate Terry famous.

1. *Tom Taylor*. The chief dramatic critic of *The Times* at the date of Kate Terry's triumph at the St James's Theatre was John Oxenford. Taylor was the art critic, but occasionally wrote about plays in Oxenford's place. No doubt when he heard his protégée was going to play Miss Herbert's part, he saw an opportunity for advancing her reputation in London, and laid his plans for noticing her performance. The eulogy which appeared in *The Times* the next

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

than ever. They absorbed all my time, all my interest, all my love. country. When my two children were born, I thought of the stage less I was very happy, leading a quiet, domestic life in the heart of the Soon afterwards I left the stage for six years. I left it without regret. feeling that I was responsible.

back on his head. This made me very miserable, as I could not help upstairs to his dressing-room in a hurry, he missed his footing and fell occasion Clayton suddenly found he was late in changing, and, rushing This dancing during the entrance was very popular among us. Many a during the interval, instead of changing his dress for the next piece. dancing with me on the stage to the music which was being played The curtain had fallen on "The Household Fairy," and Clayton was chiefly through an accident which befell poor Jack Clayton through me. was in a little piece called "The Household Fairy," and I remember it I played once more at the Queen's after Katharine and Petruccio. It give up his place to me.

in a hurry to get away. Very gravely and quietly Henry Irving used to Treasury Day to receive them. I was always late in coming, and always salaries brought to our dressing-rooms, we used to wait in a queue on his will I remember his courtesy. In those days, instead of having out moreover, fixed on a world outside the theatre. Better than his talent and eyes he must, no doubt. But my eyes were not quick, and they were,

As one of the audience I was much struck by Irving's treatment of interjections and exclamations in "Hamlet." He breathed the line: "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt," as one long yearning, and, done when you read the scene at home.

After having been very quiet and rapid, very discreet, he pronounced these lines in a loud, clear voice, dragged out every syllable as if there never could be an end to his horror and his rage.

I had been familiar with the scene from my childhood—I had studied it; I had heard from my father how Macready acted in it, and now I found that I had a *fool* of an idea of it! That's the advantage of study, good people, who go to see Shakespeare acted. It makes you know sometimes what is being done, and what you never dreamed would be

Though all the earth overwhelm them to men's eyes.

...foul deeds will rise,

rest did not exist for him.... So onward to the crowning couplet: Irving's face, as he listened to Horatio's tale, blazed with intelligence. He cross-examined the men with keenness and authority. His mental deductions as they answered were clearly shown. With "I would I had been there" the cloud of unseen witnesses with whom he had before been communing again descended. For a second or two Horatio and the

For God's love, let me hear.

But the dreamer becomes attentive, sharp as a needle, with the words:

My father! Methinks I see my father.

He is still out of it when he says:

nates it. Bit by bit as Horatio talks, Hamlet comes back into the world. As a bad actor befores Shakespeare's meaning, so a good actor illumines it.

Well, there was never any doubt that Henry Irving saw it, and it was through his acting in the Horatio scene that he made us sure.

From the first I saw this extravagance, this bizarre in Henry Irving's acting. I noticed, too, its infinite variety. In "Hamlet," during the first scene with Horatio, Marcellus and Bernardo, he began by being very absent and distant. He exchanged greetings sweetly and gently, but he was the visionary. His feet might be on the ground, but his head was towards the stars "where the eternal arc." Years later he said to me of another actor in "Hamlet": "*He* would never have seen the ghost."

All great acting has a certain strain of extravagance which the imitators catch hold of. They give us the eccentric body without the sublime soul.

Moray Lodge, Campden Hill, was a kind of "salon" in the 'sixties. There the "Moray Minstrels," among whom, George du Maurier, then at the beginning of his brilliant career, shone as a singer and raconteur, used to give entertainments.

4. *Fechter*. Charles Albert Fechter came to London from Paris. He had a great reputation as a perfect stage lover. He played Hamlet as "a pale woe-begone Norseman with long flaxen hair, wearing a strange garb, never associated with the part upon the English stage, and making a piratical sweep upon the whole fleet of little theatrical prescriptions" (Charles Dickens). "Fechter's Hamlet was chiefly remarkable for light hair and bad English" (William Winter). His reign at the Lyceum was brief, and was remembered chiefly on account of Kate Terry's Ophelia.

5. *Ellen Terry's Second Retirement*. "She left the stage without hesitation for the best years of her youth to keep house on £3 a week with Edward William Godwin; and was induced to return to it, only by an offer of £40 when she had two children to provide for." (From Bernard Shaw's Preface to "Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw: A Correspondence") I doubt whether the truth about Ellen Terry's second retirement is quite as simple as Mr Shaw represents. From such facts as are known, and they are few because Ellen Terry spoke about this period of her life with reserve even to those most intimate with her, and then subjectively rather than objectively, very different conclusions can be drawn.

There is no proof that Ellen Terry left the stage in 1868 without hesitation, and voluntarily. It is clear from what she says in her autobiography that from the time she was driven back to her work (after her separation from Watts) she took no pleasure in it, but disillusioned, and suffering from a sense of cruel injustice, she was then unable to take pleasure in anything. "I hated my life, hated every one and everything," she writes. The stage was no more detestable to her than the world. It was while she was in this unhappy frame of mind, kicking against the pricks, that she met Edward Godwin, the friend of those happy days at Bristol, again. It was in his favour that he was a citizen of that artistic paradise from which she had been ignominiously expelled. Who would wish to pry into the secret places of Ellen Terry's heart? But the story that she ran away from her family and the stage at the dictates of love is not the exact truth. The parents of the youthful Mrs Watts were, in spite of their association with the stage, in spite of their having begun their married life unconventionally with an elopement, eminently Victorian in their standards of conduct. An indiscretion of Nelly's—it is said that when Edward Godwin was ill, she stayed to look after him one night instead of returning home—led to a domestic scene, that often acted scene which ends in a door being slammed on an erring daughter. The sequel was that Ellen Terry "set up house" with Edward Godwin somewhere in Hertfordshire. One reason for her abandoning the stage at the same time appears to have been that she had incurred the disapproval of all the friends who had interested themselves in her career as an actress. She may have been influenced too by a genuine wish not to be a source of embarrassment to her family. Her si through

All went well until the last line. Then he came to a stop.
Nothing would make him say sheep!
 With a face beaming with anxiety to please, looking adorable, he
 would offer any word but the right one.

When the voices of children are heard on the green,
 And laughing is heard on the hill,
 My heart is at rest within my breast,
 And everything else is still.
 Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
 And the dew of the night arise,
 Come, come, leave off play, and let us away,
 Till morning appears in the skies.
 No, no, let us play, for yet it is day,
 And we cannot go to sleep.
 Besides, in the sky the birds fly,
 And the hills are all covered with sheep . . .

"*That's not right!*"
 Teddy was of a more flattering disposition, but very obstinate when
 he chose. I remember "wrasling" with him for hours over a little Blake
 poem which he had learned by heart, to say to his mother:

"You *did* look long and thin in your grey dress."
 "When you fainted I thought you was going to fall into the orchestra
 —you was so long."
 In "New Men and Old Acres" I had to play the piano while I conducted a conversation consisting on my side chiefly of haughty remarks to the effect that "blood would tell," to talk naturally and play at the same time. I "shied" at the lines, became self-conscious, and either sang the words or altered the rhythm of the tune to suit the pace of the speech. I grew anxious about it, and was always practising it at home. After much hard work Edy used to wither me with:

My little daughter was a very severe critic! I think if I had listened to her, I should have left the stage in despair. She saw me act for the first time as Mabel Vane, but no compliments were to be extracted from her.
 My little daughter was a very severe critic! I think if I had listened to her, I should have left the stage in despair. She saw me act for the first time as Mabel Vane, but no compliments were to be extracted from her.
 had grown up these old men would still ask affectionately after "little todians—old Crimean veterans, most of them—and when the children performances of "As You Like It" for the benefit of the Palace Court where my children were very happy. They used to give Theatrical. It was then, too, that I had my first cottage—a wee place at myself all luxuries. I did not take a house until I went to the Court

CHAPTER IV
SIX YEARS IN THE COUNTRY

(1868-1874)

§ I

MY disappearance from the stage must have been a heavy blow to my father and mother, who had urged me to return in 1866 after the failure of my first marriage, and were quite certain that I had a great future. For the first time for years they had no child in the theatre. Marion and Floss, who were afterwards to adopt the stage as a profession, were still at school; Kate had married; and none of their sons had shown any great aptitude for acting. Fred, the youngest, who was afterwards to do so well, was at this time hardly out of petticoats.

My retirement was a very different one from my sister Kate's. I left the stage quietly and secretly, and I was cut off from my family and friends.

Then a dreadful thing happened. A body was found in the river—the dead body of a young woman, very fair and slight and tall. Every one thought it was my body.

I had gone away without a word. No one knew where I was. My own father identified the corpse, and Floss and Marion, at their boarding-school, were put into mourning. Then mother went. She kept her head under the shock of the likeness, and bethought her of "a strawberry mark upon my left arm." (*Really* it was on my left knee.) That settled it, for there was no such mark to be found upon the poor corpse. It was just at this moment that the news came to me in my country retreat that I had been found dead, and I flew up to London to give ocular proof to my poor distracted parents that I was alive. Mother, who had been the only one not to identify the drowned girl, confessed to me that she was so like me that just for a second she, too, was deceived. You see, they knew I had not been very happy since my return to the stage, and when I went away without a word, they were terribly anxious, and prepared to believe the first bad tidings that came to hand. It came in the shape of that most extraordinary likeness between me and that poor soul who threw herself into the river.

I was generally weeping, too, for Olivia, more than any part, touched me to the heart. I cried too much in it, just as I cried too much later on of weeping at the wing while I rehearsed "Olivia."

Things which were most illuminating, and he paid me the compliment in the stalls and criticise. But he would come quickly to me and tell me interested very little with the stage-management, and did not care to sit in the theatre he was charming—from an actor's point of view. He plays, and yet never had a farthing to bless himself with!

A true Bohemian in money matters, he made a great deal out of his his ideas were magnificent and instinct with refinement. He could eat a large raw onion every night like any peasant, yet He was Irish all over—the strangest mixture of the aristocrat and the ended in smoke. With all his charm Willis was not cut out for a husband. was at one time engaged to one of the girls, but it was a good thing it I had known Willis before this through the Forbes-Robertsons. He

of Wakefield." to be grateful to him, it only because he gave me the second great opportunity of my career—the part of Olivia in Willis's play from "The Vicar Personally, I always got on well with my new manager, and I ought to be grateful to him, it only because he gave me the second great opportunity of my career—the part of Olivia in Willis's play from "The Vicar of Wakefield."

The members of his company were his, body and soul, while they were rehearsing. He gave them fifteen minutes for lunch, and any actor or actress who was foolish or unlucky enough to be a minute late, was sorry afterwards. Mr Hare was peppery and irascible, and lost his temper easily.

Mr Hare was one of the best stage managers that I have met during the whole of my long experience in the theatre. He was snappy in manner, extremely irritable if anything went wrong, but he knew what he wanted, and he got it. No one has ever surpassed him in the securing of a perfect *ensemble*. He was the *Missionnaire* among the theatre artists. Very likely he would have failed if he had been called upon to produce "King John," but what better evidence of his talent than that he knew his line and stuck to it?

Shakespeare at the Princess's, and had had to employ it again in romantic plays for Charles Keadel. The pit and gallery were the audience which we had to reach. At the Prince of Wales's I had to adopt a more delicate, more subtle, more intimate style. But the breadth had to be there just the same—as seen through the wrong end of the microscope. In acting one must possess great strength before one can be delicate in the right way. Too often weakness is mistaken for delicacy.

I was barely twenty when I left the stage for the second time, and I haven't made up my mind yet whether it was good or bad for me, as an actress, to cease from practising my craft for six years. Talma, the great French actor, recommends long spells of rest. This comes in very useful in my defence, yet I am not convinced they are always beneficial. I can't imagine Henry Irving leaving the stage for six months, much less for six years, and I don't think it would have been of the slightest benefit to him. But he had not been on the stage as a child. If I was able to rest so long without rusting, it was, I am sure, because I had been thoroughly trained in the technique of acting long before I reached my twentieth year—an age at which most students are just beginning to wrestle with elementary principles.

Of course, I did not argue in this way at the time! I had no intention of ever acting again when I left the Queen's Theatre. If it is the mark of the artist to love art before everything, to renounce everything for its sake, to think all the sweet human things of life well lost if only he may attain something, do some good, great work—then I was never an artist. I have been happiest in my work when I was working for some one else. I admire those impersonal people who care for nothing outside their own ambition, yet I detest them at the same time, and I have the simplest faith that absolute devotion to another human being means the greatest *happiness*. That happiness for a time was now mine.

I led a most unconventional life, and experienced exquisite delight from the mere fact of being in the country. No one knows what "the country" means until he or she has lived in it. "Then, if ever, come perfect days."

What a sensation it was, too, to be untrammelled by time! Actors must take care of themselves and their voices, husband and their strength for the evening work, and when it is over they are too tired to do anything! For the first time I was able to put all my energies into living. Charles Lamb writes that when he left the East India House, he felt embarrassed by the vast estates of time at his disposal, and wished that he had a bailiff to manage them for him, but I knew no such embarrassment when I left the stage. I began gardening, "the purest of human pleasures"; I learned to cook, and in time cooked very well, though my first essay in that difficult art was rewarded with dire and complete failure.

It was a chicken! Now, as all the chickens had names—Sultan, Duke, Lord Tom Noddy, Lady Teazle, and so forth—and as I was very proud of them as living birds, it was a great wrench to kill one at all, to start with. It was the murder of Sultan, not the killing of a chicken. However, at last it was done, and Sultan deprived of his feathers, floured, and

His bluff was colossal. Once when he was a little boy and wanted
 fident and dashing appearance.

On a first night he was shaking all over with fright, in spite of his con-
 audacious as he seemed, no man was ever more nervous on the stage.
 roamer, the veritable gipsy, always looked out of his insolent eyes. Yet,
 tremely queer predicaments." The adventurous, dare-devil spirit of the
 "hobnobbed with every kind of queer folk, and found myself in ex-
 engineer, sheep-farmer, and horse-breeder. He had, to use his own words,
 acted with him at the Court. He had been midshipman, tea-planter,
 Terriss had had every sort of adventure by land and sea before I
 The most untidy chap I ever saw!"

"The man's a blackguard! Why, he throws his things all over the room!
 and of a young man who had proposed for his daughter's hand he said:
 sailor. He folded up his clothes and kept them in beautiful condition;
 the weaknesses of a child. In the theatre he had the tidy habits of a
 midshipman, whose weaknesses provoked no more condemnation than
 outside public. To the end he was "Sailor Bill"—a sort of grown-up
 He always commanded the love of his intimates as well as that of the
 he was in rough clothes, he looked a prince.

When he was "dressed up" Terriss was spoiled by fine feathers; when
 driving the chariot of the sun—precisely much the same thing, I imagined
 boy flashing past, whistling, on the high seat of his cart, or of Phæthon
 could ever be angry with him. Sometimes he reminded me of a butcher-
 hind. He had unbounded impudence, yet so much charm that no one
 talking about. Yet he "got there," while many cleverer men stayed be-
 like the "inspired idiot," Mrs Pritchard, he did not know what he was
 by divine right, can, up to a certain point, do no wrong. Very often,
 than Terriss. He was one of those heaven-born actors who, like Kings
 As I look back, I remember no figure in the theatre more remarkable

without thinking how absolutely *to the life* Terriss had got it.

Olivia says to Squire Thornhill in the first act, and never did I say it
 whipping your boot, you look the very picture of vain indifference,"
 saw the production, that Terriss was the best. "As you stand there,
 cast. Where all were good, it will be admitted, I think, by every one who
 To go back to "Olivia." Like all Hare's productions, it was perfectly
 ner, too well-bred to be hoydenish, must have been of great value.

Rosalind's lines beautifully, and that her clear, grey eyes and frank man-
 lovely speech, and Lillie Langtry had it. I can imagine that she spoke
 Just at this time there was a great dearth on the stage of people with

LILLIE.

last night to see if it was really me. It was so sweet of you to write me such
 a nice letter, and then a telegram, too! Yours ever, dear Nell,

trussed. I had no idea *how* this was all done, but I tried to make him "sit up" nicely like the chickens in the shops.

He came up to the table looking magnificent—almost turkey-like in his proportions.

"Hasnt this chicken rather an odd smell?" some one said.

"How can you!" I answered. "It must be quite fresh—it's Sultan!"

However, when we began to carve, the smell grew more and more potent.

I had cooked Sultan without taking out his in'ards!

There was no dinner that day except bread-sauce, beautifully made, well-cooked vegetables, and pastry like the foam of the sea. I had a wonderful hand for pastry!

My hour of rising at this pleasant place near Mackery End in Hertfordshire was six. Then I washed the babies. I had a perfect mania for *washing* everything and everybody. We had one little servant, and I insisted on washing her head. Her mother came up from the village to protest.

"Never washed her head in my life. Never washed any of my children's heads. And just look at their splendid hair!"

After the washing I fed the animals. There were two hundred ducks and fowls to feed, as well as the children. By the time I had done this, and cooked the dinner, the morning had flown away. After the midday meal I sewed. Sometimes I drove out in the pony-cart. And in the evening I walked across the common to fetch the milk. The babies used to roam where they liked on this common in charge of a bulldog, while I sat and read.

I studied cookery-books instead of parts. Mrs Beeton instead of Shakespeare!

Of course, I thought my children the most brilliant and beautiful children in the world, and, indeed, "this side idolatry," they were exceptional, and they had an exceptional bringing up. They were allowed no rubbishy picture-books, but from the first Japanese prints lined their nursery walls, and Walter Crane was their classic. If injudicious friends gave the wrong sort of present, it was promptly burned. A mechanical mouse in which Edy, my little daughter, showed keen interest and delight, was taken away as being "realistic and common." Only wooden toys were allowed. This severe training proved so effective that when a doll dressed in a violent pink silk dress was given to Edy, she said it was "vulgar"!

By that time she had found a tongue, but until she was two years old she never spoke a word, though she seemed to notice everything

He played the part again at the Lyceum. How charming he was! And how very, very young! He at once gave promise of being a good actor, and of having done the right thing in following his brother on to the stage. At the present day I consider him the only actor on the stage who can play Shakespeare's fools as they should be played.

§ 5

I HAVE not the faintest recollection of "Brothers," the play by Coghlan, in which I see by the evidence of an old play-bill that I made my first appearance under Mr Hare's management.

Charles Coghlan seems to have been consistently unlucky. Yet he was a good actor and a brilliant man. I always enjoyed his companionship; found him a pleasant, natural fellow, absorbed in his work, and not at all the "dangerous" man that some people represented him.

Within less than a month from the date of the production of "Brothers," "New Men and Old Acres" was put into the Court bill. It was not a new play, but the public at once began to crowd to see it, and I have heard that it brought Mr Hare £30,000. My part, Lillian Vavasour, had been played in the original production by Mrs Kendal, but it had been written for me by Tom Taylor when I was at the Haymarket, and it suited me very well. The revival was well acted all round. Charles Kelly was splendid as Mr Brown, and H. B. Conway, a young actor whose good looks were talked of everywhere, was also in the cast. He was a descendant of Lord Byron's, and had a look of the *handsomest* portraits of the poet. With his bright hair curling tightly all over his well-shaped head, his beautiful figure, and charming presence, Conway created a sensation in the 'eighties almost equal to that made by the more famous beauty, Lillie Langtry.

As an actor he belonged to the Terriss type, but he was not nearly as good as Terriss. Of his extraordinary failure in "Faust" I shall say something when I come to the Lyceum productions. After "New Men and Old Acres," Mr Hare tried a posthumous play by Lord Lytton—"The House of Darnley." It was *not* a good play, and I was *not* good in it, although the pleasant adulation of some of my friends has made me out so. The play met with some success. It was during its run that Mr Hare commissioned Willis to write "Olivina."

§ 6

I HAD met Charles Kelly before this engagement at the Court Theatre. He had acted with me after my return to the stage in 1874, both in

"Boo" became an institution in these days. She was the wife of a doctor who kept a private asylum in the neighbouring village, and on his death she tried to look after the lunatics herself. But she wasn't

him at all. We kept a goat, a dear fellow whom I liked very much until I caught him one day chasing my daughter. I seized him by his horns to inflict severe punishment; but then I saw that his eyes were exactly like mine, and it made me laugh so much that I let him go and never punished him at all.

"I don't half like it," she said. "They'll take you for the cook, and me dock! I went to church in blue-and-white cotton, with my servant in silk. grew thinner than ever—as thin as a whippoorwill, or a hurdle, or a had-floors and lighting fires, cooking, gardening, and harnessing the pony, I It was truly the simple life we led in Hertfordshire. From scrubbing immediately and humbly obeyed.

brought me here!" No wonder she was considered a dour child! I she said: "Take me away! take me away! you ought never to have clown pretended to fall from the tight-rope, and the drum went bang! When I took her to her first theatre—it was Sanger's Circus—and the a radish. It's as big as—big as *God!*"

should have come running to beg me to come quick: "Miss Eddy found that when she dug up a turnip in the garden for the first time, she could cry. But why should any one be interested in that? Is it interesting morning, with the reassuring information that "there are lots more," I think of little Eddy bringing me in minute bunches of flowers all the "Peter Pan" for the seventh time: "Oh, for an hour of Herod!" When I some one will exclaim with a witty and delightful author when he saw I feel that if I go maundering on much longer about my children,

woman! exhort him, when he said, "Master Teddy afraid of the dark," to be a She used to hit him on the head with a wooden spoon for crying, and "The feather of England" was considered by his sister a great coward. looking, she called "the feather of England."

The nursemaid, Essie, described Eddy tersely as "a picc," while Teddy, who was adored by every one because he was fat and fair and angelic-

"There's some more." She spoke quite distinctly. It was almost uncanny. "More what?" I asked in a trembling voice, afraid that having delivered herself once, she might lapse into dumbness.

"Birds!" with her grave dark eyes. We were out driving when I heard her voice for the first time:

pared me to find her interesting and singular (I have never been susceptible to mere prettiness) I was less struck than I should have been if she had been quite new to me."

2. *Carmen Sylva*. In a copy of Carmen Sylva's "Thoughts of a Queen" belonging to Ellen Terry there is a note in her handwriting giving a more detailed impression of the royal author: "Beautiful creature, Elizabeth Queen of Roumania. She read a play to H. I. and E. T., and was exquisitely impressive and expressive. She translated as she read, standing up, and her movements were grandly simple. Her face glowed with intelligence. The voice a little hard, but not sharp. Her very beautiful eyes glittered. The mouth well cut—a little too firm. The hands beautiful, and she used them delicately, and slowly. She had arranged her effects to perfection, and most folk would not have perceived the arrangement. A gracious, simple woman, every inch a Queen. She was tall and finely proportioned."

3. "I had studied it." This reference of Ellen Terry's to study invites a comment on a distinction, not realized now-a-days, between memorizing and studying. It can be seen from this passage that Ellen Terry had studied the part of Hamlet. This does not imply she had learned it by heart. She had been trained in a school in which the study of great parts, not with the object of playing them but with that of developing dramatic perception, was considered essential in the player's education.

4. *John Hare as "stage-manager"*: Ellen Terry is writing of days when the terminology of the theatre was somewhat different. The stage-manager of yesterday is the "producer" of today. The stage-manager of today is the "prompter" of yesterday. His duties were performed by the call-boy.

5. *Lillian Vavasour*. It was as Lillian Vavasour in "New Men and Old Acres" that Ellen Terry "completely conquered" Bernard Shaw, convincing him that here was the woman for the new drama which was still "in the womb of time waiting for Ibsen to impregnate it."

6. *Ellen Terry's Second Marriage*. The belated divorce proceedings taken by G. F. Watts had left Ellen Terry free to marry again. Watts has been severely censured for not taking these proceedings earlier at the time of Ellen Terry's elopement with Godwin. Perhaps it was for this he feared a "male-diction" as well as for treating his young wife harshly. But I have no data for an explanation of the delay. It may be known to some of Ellen Terry's friends whether Watts would have applied for a divorce earlier had she wished it, and he been convinced it would be to her benefit, but I am in the dark about it, and am willing to make the charitable assumption that the question of divorce did not arise until after Ellen Terry's separation from Godwin. No doubt one of her motives then for deciding to marry was a desire, in her children's interests, to regularize her position. Yet it is conceivable that she was strongly attracted by Charles Wardell. All through her life the man of brains competed for her affections with the man of brawn. But this man of brawn, although a good fellow in some ways—he had a genuine affection for his wife's children, who for a time bore his name—had a violent and

see my Olivia for himself.

The call was in reference to my engagement as Ophelia. Very characteristic I see it now to have been of Henry to have been content to take my powers as an actress more or less on trust. A mutual friend, Lady Pollock, had told him that I was the very person for him, that "all London" was talking of my Olivia, that I had acted well in Shakespeare with the Bancrofts, that I should bring to the Lyceum Theatre what players call "a personal following." Henry chose his friends as carefully as he chose his company and his staff. He believed in Lady Pollock implicitly, and he did not—it is possible that he could not—come and

HENRY IRVING.

With every good wish, believe me, Yours sincerely,

on Tuesday next at two o'clock.

DEAR MISS TREARY,—I look forward to the pleasure of calling upon you

during the entire period of his Lyceum management.

The first letter that I ever received from Henry Irving was written on July 20th, 1878, from 15a, Grafton Street, the house in which he lived

during the first few months of his management.

lent him a certain sum of money, every farthing of which was repaid the beginning of his tenancy of the Lyceum, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts ventures. The only shadow of foundation for this statement is that at It was said in later years that rich ladies financed Henry Irving's

unremittently and unrelentingly to his art and his ambition.

It was during the run of "Olivia" that Henry Irving became sole lessee of the Lyceum Theatre. For a long time he had been contemplating the step, but it was one of such magnitude that it could not be taken in a hurry. I daresay he found it difficult to separate from Mrs Bateman and from her daughter, who had for such a long time been his "leading lady." He had to be a little cruel, not for the last time in a career devoted unremittently and unrelentingly to his art and his ambition.

§ 1

(1878-1880)

WORK AT THE LYCEUM

CHAPTER VII

they used to go through scene after scene of "As You Like It," for their own amusement, not for an audience, in the Wilderness at Hampton Court. They were by no means prodigies, but it did not surprise me that my son, when he grew up, should be first a good actor, then an artist of originality, and should finally turn all his brains and industry to new developments in the art of the theatre. My daughter has acted also—not enough to please me, for I have a very firm belief in her talents—and has shown again and again that she can design and make clothes for the stage that are both lovely and effective. In all my most successful stage dresses lately she has had a hand, and if I had anything to do with a national theatre, I should, without prejudice, put her in charge of the wardrobe at once!

I may be a proud parent, but I have always refrained from "pushing" my children. They have had to fight for themselves, and to their mother their actual achievements have mattered very little. So long as they were not lazy, I have always felt that I could forgive them anything!

And now Teddy and Edy—Teddy in a minute white piqué suit, and Edy in a tiny kimono, in which she looked as Japanese as everything which surrounded her—disappear from these pages for quite a long time. But all this time, you must understand, they are educating their mother!

§ 3

CHARLES READE, having brought me back to the stage, and being my manager into the bargain, was deeply concerned about my progress as an actress. During the run of "The Wandering Heir" he used to sit in a box every night to watch the play, and would send me round notes between the acts, telling me what I had done ill and what well in the preceding act. Dear, kind, unjust, generous, cautious, impulsive, passionate, gentle Charles Reade. Never have I known any one who combined so many qualities, far asunder as the poles, in one single disposition. He was placid and turbulent, yet always majestic. He was inexplicable and entirely lovable—a stupid old dear, and as wise as Solomon! He seemed guileless, and yet had moments of suspicion and craftiness worthy of the wisdom of the serpent. One moment he would call me "dearest child"; the next, with indignant emphasis, "*Madam!*"

When "The Wandering Heir" had at last exhausted its great popularity, I went on a tour with Charles Reade in several of his plays. In spite of his many and varied interests, he had entirely succumbed to the magic of the "irresistible theatre," and it used to strike me as rather pathetic to see a man of his intellectual power and originality working the stage sea at nights, in company with a rough lad, in his dramatic

though a generous quality of the mind and heart, and best left to lookers-on, who have plenty of time to develop it.

I was with him when he saw Sarah Bernhardt act for the first time. The play was "Ruy Blas," and it was one of Sarah's bad days. She was walking through the part listlessly, and I was angry that there should be any ground for Henry's indifference. The same thing happened years later, when I took him to see Eleonora Duse. The play was "La Locandiera," in which to my mind she is not at her very best. He was surprised at my enthusiasm. There was an element of justice in his attitude towards the performance which infuriated me, but I doubt if he would have shown more enthusiasm if he had seen her at her very best.

As the years went on he grew very much attached to Sarah Bernhardt, and admired her as a colleague whose managerial work in the theatre was as dignified as his own, but of her superb powers as an actress, I don't believe he ever had a glimmering notion!

Perhaps it is not true, but, as I believe it to be true, I may as well state it: *It was never any pleasure to him to see the acting of other actors and actresses.* All the same, Salvini's Othello I know he thought magnificent, but he would not speak of it.

What I have written so far I have written merely to indicate the qualities in Henry Irving's nature, which were unintelligible to me, perhaps because I have always been more woman than artist. He always put the theatre first. He lived in it, he died in it. He possessed none of what I may call my homely qualities—the love of children, the love of a home, the dislike of solitude. I have always thought it hard to find my inferiors. He was sure of his high place. He was far simpler than I in some ways. He would talk, for instance, in such an ingenuous way to painters and musicians that I blushed for him.

He never pretended. One of his biographers has said that he posed as being a French scholar. Such a thing, and all things like it, were impossible to his nature. If it were necessary in one of his plays to say a few French words, he took infinite pains to learn them and said them beautifully.

He once told me that in the early part of his career, before I knew him, he had been jeered at, and hooted, because of his thin legs. The first service I did him was to tell him they were beautiful.

"What do you want with fat, podgy, prize-fighter legs!" I expostulated.

Praise to some people at certain stages of their career is more helpful than blame. I admired the very things in Henry for which other people criticised him. I believe this helped him.

I brought help, too, in pictorial matters. Henry Irving had had little

He began by buying *real* pigs, *real* sheep, a *real* goat, and a *real* dog. *Real* litter was strewn all over the stage, much to the inconvenience of the unreal farm-labourer, Charles Kelly, who could not compete with it, although he looked as like a farmer as any actor could. They all looked their parts better than the real wall which ran across the stage,

I think he was quite right about this. Would that he had been as right in his theories about stage management! He was a rare one for realism. He had *preached* it in all his plays, and when he produced a one-act play, "Rachael the Reaper," in front of "The Wandering Heir," he began to practise what he preached—jumped into reality up to the neck!

There, my Eleanora Delicia (this was his name for me, my real, full name being Ellen Alicia), stick that up in some place where you will often see it. Better put it on *your looking-glass*. And if you can once get those words into your noddle, it will save you a world of unhappiness.

THERE DO EXIST SUCH THINGS AS HONEST MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

big letters:

morning he wrote me a letter with the following postscript written in He used to say that there should be no such word as "quarrel," and one some justification because we had suffered so much from being estranged. me some "treat"—a luncheon, a present, or a drive. We both felt we needed to quarrel with him, because when we made it up he was sure to give though it was a painful time for both of us, it was almost worth while Behind Me" with such pathos that he himself was moved to tears. But, at the Tom Taylors', on Sunday evenings, and sing "The Girl I Left gentleman of the Colonel Newcome type whom I had seen stand up violence that it was almost impossible to identify him with the kind old this unfair, as the work had to be done, and flamed out at us with such hearsal looking so tired yesterday? You work her too hard." He thought very lightly and playfully: "Why did poor Nell come home from re- rage, and his dark eyes blazed, because the same "pulling woman" said than you do, or any pulling woman." Another time he grew white with "Your Nelly!" said Charles Recade. "I love her a thousand times better resented this very much: "How can you say such things to my Nelly?" desert a sinking ship!" My dear old companion, Boo, who was with me, for Susan Merton. For answer I got a fiery "Madam, you are a rat! You ventured to suggest that it would be good economy to get some one else for acting. I knew that the tour was not a financial success, and I had a part which I could not bear to be paid twenty-five pounds a week version of "Hard Cash." In this play, which was known as "Our Scaman,"

seemed to me less wonderful than it had at Birmingham. At rehearsals upon him, Henry Irving's Hamlet on the first night at the Lyceum Perhaps because I was nervous and irritable about my own part from come first, the realism afterwards.

My experiences convinced me that the actor must imagine first and observe afterwards. It is no good observing life and bringing the result to the stage without selection, without a definite idea. The idea must anywhere—a face of pathetic and resigned grief.

I saw another woman laugh with a face that had no gleam of mirth very young, and the movement was as poignant as it was beautiful. room like a swallow. I never forgot it. She was very thin, very pathetic, waiting, waiting. Suddenly she threw up her hands and sped across the to see her face. It was quite vacant, but the body expressed that she was noticed a young girl gazing at the wall. I went between her and the wall too *theatrical* to teach me anything. Then, just as I was going away, I study wits astray. I was disheartened at first. There was no beauty, no nature, no pity in most of the lunatics. Strange as it may sound, they were Like all Ophelias before (and after) me, I went to the madhouse to picture.

themselves, contributed to a definite result, and kept me always in the at first. I found so much to do! Little bits of business which, slight in than most actresses. I have been told that Ophelia has "nothing to do" of *sustained* effort, but can perhaps manage a *cumulative* effort better mad scene. This was a tremendous thing for me, who am not capable Ophelia only *permeates* the scenes in which she is concerned until the and took farewell of the part for ever, I was just *damnable*!

Lane, in 1896, when I played the mad scene for Nelly Farren's benefit, Ophelia really well. It was in Chicago some ten years later. At Drury had not rehearsed enough. I can remember one occasion when I played although the critics and the public were pleased. To myself I *failed*. I poor Ophelia. When the first night came, I did not play the part well, The only person who did not profit by Henry's ceaseless labours was leaped" themselves, and he ended his days in a lunatic asylum.

right. The brilliant gifts of Clarke, before many years had passed, "over his music for "The Merchant of Venice" were all, to my mind, exactly His Danish march in "Hamlet," his Brocken music in "Faust," and "Upon my soul, it's better! The 'Guv'nor' was perfectly right."

suggested by Henry, and would confess that the music was improved. But the next day he would return with the score altered on the lines music, or he couldn't ask me to do such a thing."

I was told off to smooth him down. "Mr Irving knows nothing about

"The hussy" had an entire ecstatic reception from the audience at the New Queen's Theatre the night she made her re-appearance in "The Wandering Heir" (February 28, 1874, the day after her twenty-sixth birthday). The play, inspired by the famous Tichborne case, had been running successfully for some time with Mrs John Wood as Philippa Chester, and now curiosity to see Ellen Terry in the part gave it a new lease of life. It was transferred to Astley's Theatre in the following April.

"A few days after Ellen Terry's death her daughter found a piece of paper labelled 'My Friends.' In this roll of honour which there was evidence was of very recent date, the name of Charles Reade was written first. Directly underneath it was the name of Bernard Shaw" (From "Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw: A Correspondence").

4. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter IV were: Philippa Chester ("The Wandering Heir," 1874); Susan Merton ("Never Too Late to Mend," 1874); Helen Rolleston ("Our Seaman," 1874); Volante ("The Honeymoon," 1874); Kate Hardcastle ("She Stoops to Conquer," 1874).

Kyrle Bellew, the Osric of the production, was another man of the future, though we did not know it. He was very handsome, a tremendous

way. Rosencrantz and the rest were his school of stage-craft. accented his work as an actor always, but his chief ambition lay another Rosencrantz very nearly. Consummate care, precision, and brains characterised him, Mr Pinero looked much as he does now. He played actors who came in and out of the room. Although he was so much humanity with which the walls were peopled, or the present realities of busy in the greenroom studying by turns the pictures of past actors, youth who could never be caught loathing. He was always reading, or We had young men in the cast, too. There was one very studious of the Ramesses head in the British Museum.

With his deep-set eyes, hawk-like nose, and clear brow, he reminded me actor. His voice as the Ghost was beautiful, and his appearance splendid. Shakespeare's when his memory of the text failed—was a remarkable in "Meadisms"—he substituted the most excruciatingly funny words for Mead worthily repaid the trust. Meade, in spite of a terrible excellence In the cast of "Hamlet" Mr Forrester, Mr Chippendale, and Tom briefly.

him in preference to the two any day. "I can trust them," he explained Henry always had a fondness for "the old actor," and would engage introduce pale-coloured dresses into it.

a scene to be kept dark and mysterious," I knew better than to try and consulted me about the costumes, but if he said: "I want such and such had a finer sense of what was right for the *scene*. After this he always although I knew more of art and archæology in dress than he did, he The incident, whether Henry was right or not, led me to see that, the white dress Bolton sheeting and rabbit, and I believe it looked better. China and miniver, which had been used for the black dress, I had for the cause of needless expense worried me. So instead of the *crêpe de before!* I was very thrifty in those days, and the thought of having been I did feel a fool. What a blundering donkey I had been not to see it

this play, and that's Hamlet!"

"Yes, I did. Why not?"

"You didn't really mean that you are going to wear black in the mad scene?"

The next day Lacy came up to me:

And then they dropped the subject for that day. It was clever of him! "Oh, no!" I said.

"I should have thought you would look much better in white."

"I believe so," I answered, "but black is more interesting."

this, that they have never had a Charles Reade to give them a trouncing! Well, the letter begins with sheer eulogy. Eulogy is nice, but one does not learn anything from it. Had dear Charles Reade stopped after writing "womanly grace, subtlety, delicacy, the variety yet invariable truthfulness of the facial expression, compared with which the faces beside yours are wooden, uniform dolls," he would have done nothing to advance me in my art; but this was only the jam in which I was to take the powder! Here followed more jam—with the first taste of the powder:

I prefer you for my Philippa to any other actress, and shall do so still, even if you will not, or cannot, throw more vigour into the lines that need it. I do not pretend to be as good a writer of plays as you are an actress, but I do pretend to be a great judge of acting in general. And I know how my own lines and business ought to be rendered infinitely better than any one else, except the Omniscient. It is only on this narrow ground I presume to teach a woman of your gifts. If I teach you Philippa, you will teach me Juliet; for I am very sure that when I have seen you act her, I shall know a vast deal more about her than I do at present.

No great quality of an actress is absent from your performance. Very often you have *vigour*. But in other places where it is as much required, or even more, you turn *limp*. You have limp lines, limp business, and in Act III limp exits instead of ardent exits.

Except in the actual word used, he was perfectly right. I was not *limp*, but I was exhausted. By a natural instinct, I had produced my voice scientifically almost from the first, and I had found out for myself many things, which in these days of Delasarte systems and the science of voice-production, are taught. But when, after my six years' absence from the stage, I came back, and played a long and arduous part, I found that my breathing was still not right. This accounted for my exhaustion, or limpness and lack of vigour, as Charles Reade preferred to call it. As for the "ardent" exits, how right he was! That word set me on the track of learning the value of moving off the stage with a swift rush. I had always had the gift of being rapid in movement, but to *have* a gift, and to *use* it, are two very different things.

I never realised that I was rather quick in movement until one day when I was sitting on a sofa talking to the famous throat specialist, Dr Morell Mackenzie. In the middle of one of his sentences I said: "Wait a minute while I get a glass of water." I was out of the room and back so soon that he said, "Well, go and get it then!" and was amazed when he saw that the glass was in my hand and that I was sitting down again!

Consider! That was one of Charles Reade's favourite expressions, and just hearing him say the word used to make me consider, and think, and

right senses could have accepted my "Frou-Frou" instead of Sarah's. What I lacked technically in it was *pace*. Of course, it is partly the language. English cannot be phrased as rapidly as French. But I have heard foreign actors, playing in the English tongue, show us this rapidity, this warmth, this fury—call it what you will—and have just wondered why we are, most of us, so deficient in it.

Fechter had it, so had Edwin Forrest. When strongly moved, their passions and their fervour made them swift. The more Henry Irving felt, the more deliberate he became. I said to him once: "You seem to be hampered in the vehemence of passion." "I am," he answered. This is what crippled his Othello, and made his scene with Tubal in "The Merchant of Venice" the least successful to him. What it was to the audience is another matter. But he had to take refuge in speechless rage when he would have liked to pour out his words like a torrent.

In the company which Charles Kelly and I took round the provinces in 1880 were Henry Kemble and Charles Brookfield. Young Brookfield was just beginning life as an actor, and he was so brilliantly funny off the stage that he was always a little disappointing on it. My old manageress, Mrs Wigan, first brought him to my notice, writing in a charming little note that she knew him "to have a power of *personation* very rare in an unpractised actor," and that if we could give him varied practice, she would feel it a courtesy to her.

I had reason to admire Mr Brookfield's "powers of personation" when I was acting at Buxton. He and Kemble had no parts in one of our plays, so they amused themselves during their "off" night by hiring bath-chairs and pretending to be paralysed! We were acting in a hall, and the most infirm of the invalids visiting the place to take the waters were wheeled in at the back, and up the centre aisle. In the middle of a very pathetic scene I caught sight of Kemble and Brookfield in their bath-chairs, and could not *speak* for several minutes.

Mr Brookfield does not tell this little story in his "Random Reminiscences." It is about the only one that he has left out! To my mind he is the prince of story-tellers. All the cleverness that he should have put into his acting and his play-writing (of which since those early days he has done a great deal) he seems to have put into his life. I remember him more clearly as a delightful companion than an actor, and he won my heart at once by his kindness to my little daughter Eddy, who accompanied me on this tour. He has too great a sense of humour to resent my inadequate recollection of him. Did he not in his own book quote gleefully from an obituary notice published on a false report of his death,

Climax is reached not only by rush but by increasing pace. Your exit speech is a failure at present, because you do not vary the pace of its delivery. Get by yourself for one half-hour—if you can! Get by the seaside, if you can,

I remember that I never could see that he was right about that, and if I can't see a thing I can't do it. The author's idea must become mine before I can carry it out—at least, with any sincerity, and obedience with-out sincerity would be of small service to an author. It must be despairing to him, if he wants me to say a line in a certain way, to find that I always say it in another; but I can't help it. I have tried to act passages as I have been told, just *because* I was told and without conviction, and I have failed miserably and have had to go back to my own way.

"Now, James—for England and liberty!"
The last passage of the third act is just a little too hurried. Break the line.

A truer word was never spoken. It has never been in my power to *sustain*. In private life, I cannot sustain a hatred or a resentment. On the stages, I can pass swiftly from one effect to another, but I cannot fix *one*, and dwell on it, with that superb concentration which seems to me the special attribute of the tragic actress. To sustain, with me, is to lose the impression that I have created, not to increase its intensity.

Yes, I remember that in both these situations I used to muddle and blur the effect by doing the business and speaking at the same time. By acting on Kade's suggestion I gained confidence in making a pause. After the beating, wait at least ten seconds longer than you do—to rouse expectation—and when you do come on, make a little more of it. You ought to be very pale indeed—even to enter with a slight totter, done moderately, of course; and before you say a single word, you ought to stand shaking and with your brows knitting, looking almost terrible. Of course, I do not expect or desire to make a melo-dramatic actress of you, but still I think you capable of any effect, provided *it is not sustained too long*.

When you come to tell old Surefoot about his daughter's love, the letter goes on, you should fall into a positive imitation of his manner: crest motion-less, and hands in front, and deliver your preambles with a nasal twang. But at the second invitation to speak out, you should cast this to the winds, and go into the other extreme of bluntness and rapidity. When you meet him after the exposure, you should speak as you are coming to him and stop him in mid-career, and *then* attack him. You should also (in Act II) get the pearls back into the tree before you say: "Oh, I hope he did not see me!"

They did! And I recommend them to any one who finds it hard to overcome monotony of pace and languor of diction.

him that we had often had seven and eight calls without it. I used every argument, artistic and otherwise. Henry, according to his custom, was gentle, would not discuss it much, but remained obdurate. After holding out for a week, I gave in. "It's my duty to obey your orders, and do it," I said, "but I do it under protest." Then I burst into tears. It was really for his sake just as much as for mine. I thought it must bring such disgrace on him! Looking back on the incident, I find that the most humorous thing in connection with it was that the critics, never reluctant to accuse Henry of "monkeying" with Shakespeare if they could find cause, never noticed the gag at all!

Such disagreements occurred very seldom. In "The Merchant of Venice" I found that Henry Irving's Shylock necessitated an entire revision of my conception of Portia, especially in the trial scene, but here there was no point of honour involved. I had considered, and still am of the same mind, that Portia in the trial scene ought to be very *quiet*. I saw an extraordinary effect in this quietness. But as Henry's Shylock was quiet, I had to give it up. His heroic saint was splendid, but it wasn't good for Portia.

Of course, there were always injudicious friends to say that I had not "chances" enough at the Lyceum. Even my father said to me after

"Othello":

"We must have no more of these Ophelias and Desdemonas!"

"Father!" I cried out, really shocked.

"They're second fiddle parts—not the parts for you, Duchess."

"Father!" I gasped out again, for really I thought Ophelia a pretty good part, and was delighted at my success in it.

But granting these *were* "second fiddle" parts, I want to make quite clear that I had my turn of "first fiddle" ones. "Romeo and Juliet," "Much

Ado About Nothing," "Olivio," and "The Cup" all gave me finer opportunities than they gave Henry. In "The Merchant of Venice" and in

"Charles I" they were at least equal to his.

I have sometimes wondered what I should have accomplished with-

out Henry Irving. I might have had "bigger" parts, but it doesn't follow that they would have been better ones, and if they had been written by contemporary dramatists my success would have been less durable. "No actor or actress who doesn't play in the 'classics'—in Shakespeare or old comedy—will be heard of long," was one of Henry Irving's sayings, by

the way, and he was right.

It was a long time before we had much talk with each other. In the "Hamlet" days, Henry Irving's melancholy was appalling. I remember feeling as if I had laughed in church when he came to the foot of the stairs leading to my dressing-room, and caught me sliding down

since there it was Demosthenes studied eloquence and overcame mountains—not mole-hills like this. Being by the seaside, study those lines by themselves: "And then let them find their young gentleman, and find him quickly, for London shall not hold me long—no, nor England either."

Study to speak these lines with great volubility and fire, and settle the exact syllable to run at.

I remember that Reade, with characteristic generosity, gave me ten pounds and sent me to the seaside in earnest, as he suggests my doing, half in fun, in the letter. "I know you won't go otherwise," he said, "because you want to insure your life or do something of that sort. Here! go to Brighton—go anywhere by the sea for Sunday! Dont thank me! It's all for Philippa."

As I read these notes of his on anti-climax, monotony of pace, and all the other offences against scientific principles of acting which I committed in this one part, I feel more strongly than ever how important it is to master these principles. Until you have learned them and practised them you cannot afford to discard them. There is all the difference in the world between departure from recognised rules by one who has learned to obey them, and neglect of them through want of training or want of skill or want of understanding. Before you can be eccentric you must know where the circle is.

Nowadays acting is less scientific (except in the matter of voice-production) than it was when I was receiving hints, cautions, and advice from my two dramatist friends, Charles Reade and Tom Taylor; and the leading principles to which they attached importance have come to be regarded as old-fashioned and superfluous. This attitude is comparatively harmless in the interpretation of those modern plays in which parts are made to fit the actors and personality is everything. But those who have been led to believe that they can make their own rules find their mistake when they come to tackle Shakespeare or any of the standard dramatists in which the actors have to fit themselves to the parts. Then, if ever, technique is avenged!

All my life the thing which has struck me as wanting on the stage is *variety*. Some people are "tone-deaf," and they find it physically impossible to observe the law of contrasts. But even a physical deficiency can be overcome by that faculty for taking infinite pains which may not be genius but is certainly a good substitute for it.

When it comes to pointing out an example, Henry Irving is the monument, the great mark set up to show the genius of *will*. For years he worked to overcome the dragging leg, which seemed to attract more attention from some small-minded critics (sharp of eye, yet how dull of vision!) than all the mental splendour of his impersonations. He toiled,

The brilliant story of the Bancroft management of the old Prince of Wales's Theatre was more familiar twenty years ago than it is now. I think that few of the youngest playgoers who point out, on the first nights of important productions, a remarkably striking figure of a man with erect carriage, white hair, and flashing dark eyes—a man whose eye-glass, manners, and clothes all suggest Thackeray and Major Pendennis, in spite of his success in keeping abreast of everything modern—few playgoers, I say, who point this man out as Sir Squire Bancroft could give any adequate account of what he did for the English theatre in the

§ 2

And I, looking at that splendid head, those wonderful hands, the whole strange beauty of him, thought, "Ah, you little know!"

For an actor who can't walk, can't talk, and has no face to speak of, I've with no equipment. My legs, my voice—everything has been against me—have made the reputation I have as an actor, with nothing to help me—"I was thinking," he answered slowly, "how strange it is that I should half despairing, asked him what he was thinking about.

Only a great actor finds the difficulties of the actor's art infinite. Even comfort to himself and success with the audience. new part to him, he tried the experiment, and, as he told me, with great next play, "The Lady of Lyons"; but when it came to Shylock, a quite habit of doing. He did not heed me then, nor during the run of our the audience if I stood at the wing for ten minutes, as he was in the child, I should be paralysed with fright from over-acute realisation of which I had gained through having been on the stage when still a mere from the dressing-room. I told him that, in spite of the advantage in case self-consciousness; and I suggested a more swift entrance on the stage Queen's, he used to discuss with me the secret of my freedom from acted together after that long-ago Katharine and Petruchio period at the what the shell is to a lobster on dry land. In "Hamlet," when we first used to hamper and incommode him. His *self* was to him on a first night vowels, and the self-consciousness which in the early stages of his career and he overcame this defect, just as he overcame his difficulty with

been made in writing them out. Parts at the Lyceum were written, or printed, never typed.

These first two rehearsals—the one devoted to the reading of the play, and the other to the comparing of the parts—were generally arranged for Thursday and Friday. Then there was two days' grace. On Monday came the first stand-up rehearsal on the stage.

We then did one act straight through, and, after that, straight through again, even if it took all day. There was no luncheon interval. People took a bite when they could, or went without. Henry himself generally went without. The second day exactly the same method was pursued with the second act. All the time Henry gave the stage his personal direction, gave it keenly, and gave it whole. He was the sole superintendent of his rehearsals, with Mr Loveday as his working assistant, and Mr Allen as his prompter. This despotism meant much less wasted time than when actor-manager, "producer," literary adviser, stage manager, and any one who likes to offer a suggestion, are all competing in giving orders and advice to a company.

Henry Irving never spent much time on the women in the company, except in regard to position. Sometimes he would ask me to suggest things to them, to do for them what he did for the men. The men were as much like him when they tried to carry out his instructions as brass is like gold; but he never grew weary of "coaching" them, down to the most minute detail. Once during the rehearsals of "Hamlet" I saw him growing more and more fatigued with his efforts to get the actors who opened the play to perceive his meaning. He wanted the first voice to ring out like a pistol shot.

"Who's there?"

"Do give it up," I said. "It's no better!"

"Yes, it's a little better," he answered quietly, "and so it's worth doing." From the first the scenery, or substitute scenery, was put upon the stage for rehearsal, and the properties, or substitute properties, were to hand.

After each act had been gone through twice each day, it came to half an act once in a whole day, because of the development of detail. There was no detail too small for Henry Irving's notice. He never missed anything that was cumulative—that would contribute something to the whole effect.

The messenger who came in to announce something always needed a great deal of rehearsal. There were processions, and half processions, quiet bits when no word was spoken. There was *timing*. Nothing was left to chance.

In the master carpenter, Arnott, a Yorkshireman, we had a splendid

'seventies. Nor do the public who see an elegant little lady starting for a drive from a certain house in Berkeley Square realize that this is Marie Wilton, afterwards Mrs Bancroft, now Lady Bancroft, the comedienne who created the heroines of Tom Robertson, and, with her husband, brought what is called the cup-and-saucer drama to absolute perfection.

We players know quite well and accept with philosophy the fact that when we have done we are forgotten. We are sometimes told that we live too much in the public eye and enjoy too much public favour and attention; but at least we make up for it by leaving no trace of our short and merry reign behind us when it is over!

I have never, even in Paris, seen anything more admirable than the ensemble of the Bancroft productions. Every part in the domestic comedies, the presentation of which, up to 1875, they had made their policy, was played with such point and finish that the more rough, uneven, and emotional acting of the present day has not produced anything so good in the same line. The Prince of Wales's Theatre was the most fashionable in London, and there seemed no reason why the Robertson vogue should not last for ever.

But that's the strange thing about theatrical success. However great, it is limited in its duration, as we found out at the Lyceum twenty years later. It was not only because the Bancrofts were ambitious that they determined on a Shakespearean revival in 1875: they felt that you can give the public too much even of a good thing, and thought that a complete change might bring their theatre new popularity as well as new prestige.

I, however, thought little of this at the time. After my return to the stage in "The Wandering Heir," and my tour with Charles Reade, my interest in the theatre again declined. It has always been my fate or my nature—perhaps they are really the same thing—to be very happy or very miserable. At this time I was very miserable. I was worried to death by domestic troubles and financial difficulties. The house in which I had lived in London, after I left Hertfordshire, had been stripped of some of its most beautiful treasures by the brokers. Pressure was being put on me by well-meaning friends to leave this house and make a great change in my life. Everything was at its darkest when Mrs Bancroft came to call on me and offered me the part of Portia in "The Merchant of Venice."

I had, of course, known her before, in the way that all people in the theatre seem to know each other, and I had seen her once or twice before when she came to me as a kind of messenger of Fate, the harbinger of the true dawn of my success, the thing that had the most extraordinary significance. I could never have

will—y—am Shak—es—peare.”

By

“HAM—A—LETTE.”

announced in thrilling tones:

After a portentous wait, on swept a lady with an extraordinarily flashing eye, a masculine and muscular outside. Pounding the book with terrific energy, as if she wished to knock the stuffing out of it, she

water and a book were placed on it. unnecessary alterations in the position of the reading desk. A glass of An attendant came on the platform and made trivial and apparently The studious young clerk went to the reading.

a beacon and a star.

pation, for in those days Tradition was everything—the name of Kemble going to give a reading of the play. His heart throbbed high with anticipation, for in those days Tradition was everything—the name of Kemble Henry Irving saw that Mrs Butler, the famous Fanny Kemble, was he was a clerk, dreamed of a day when he might play it, the young Having lived with Hamlet nearly all his life, studied the part when that I have quoted justifies it.

Kemble! If there is a touch of malice in my doing so, surely the passage Now, shall I put on record what Henry Irving thought of Fanny

an exhibition extremely curious as well as entertaining.

play of Shakespeare's acted I do not know when. I think I should find such I thought much more like Young than my father or uncle. I have not seen a that he looked like my people, and sent me a photograph to prove it, which from the point of view of his critics. Edward Fitzgerald wrote me word idea of his performance, and a very hazy one indeed of the part itself as seen rather elaborate ones of his Hamlet, which, however, give me no very distinct I have seen some of the accounts and criticisms of Mr. Irving's acting, and

and made her jealous, I suppose, for the dead kings among her kindred: had his share of misfortune and failure before he came into his kingdom Fanny Kemble thought it necessary to write as follows of one who had of Irving's *originality*. The old school were not usually so generous. My father, who worshipped Macready, put Irving above him because mocked and derided him.

ated for a long time, that some found him an acquired taste, that others find no contradiction of my testimony in the fact that he was not appreciated for a long time, that some found him an acquired taste, that others nearly all of them denied what I assert. "Now, who shall arbitrate?" I Since my great comrade died I have read many estimates of him, and opinions from the multitude of their day, but who have not left behind them an impression of that inexplicable thing we call genius.

many dramatic features, but my memory, either because it is bad or because it is good, corrects my imagination.

"May I come in?"

An ordinary remark, truly, to stick in one's head for thirty-odd years! But it was made in such a *very* pretty voice—one of the most silvery voices I have ever heard from any woman except the late Queen Victoria, whose voice was like a silver stream flowing over golden stones.

The smart little figure—Mrs Bancroft was, above all things, *petite*—dressed in black—elegant Parisian black—came into a room which had been almost completely stripped of furniture. The floor was covered with Japanese matting, and at one end was a cast of the Venus of Milo, almost the same colossal size as the original.

Mrs Bancroft's wonderful grey eyes examined it curiously. The room, the statue, and I myself must all have seemed very strange to her. I wore a dress of some deep yellow woollen material which my little daughter used to call the "frog dress," because it was speckled with brown like a frog's skin. It was cut like a *Viollette-Duc* tabard, and had not a trace of the fashion of the time. Mrs Bancroft, however, did not look at me less kindly because I wore æsthetic clothes and was painfully thin. She explained that they were going to put on "*The Merchant of Venice*" at the Prince of Wales's, that she was to rest for a while for reasons connected with her health; that she and Mr Bancroft had thought of me for Portia. Portia! It seemed too good to be true! I was a student when I was young. I knew not only every word of the part, but every detail of that period of Venetian splendour in which the action of the play takes place. I had studied Velloio.

Mrs Bancroft told me that the production would be as beautiful as money and thought could make it. The artistic side of the venture was to be in the hands of Mr Godwin.

"Well, what do you say?" said Mrs Bancroft. "Will you put your shoulder to the wheel with us?"

I answered incoherently and joyfully, that of all things, I had been wanting most to play in Shakespeare; that in Shakespeare I had always felt I would play for half the salary; that—oh, I don't know what I said! Probably it was all very foolish and unbusinesslike, but the engagement was practically settled before Mrs Bancroft left the house, although I was charged not to say anything about it yet.

But theatre secrets are generally *secrets de polichinelle*. When I went to Charles Reader's house at Albert Gate on the following Sunday for one of his regular Sunday parties, he came up to me at once with a knowing look and said:

"So you've got an engagement."

and for sorrow, too, because before he was thirty my son had left the my son. Whenever I think of him in that stage garden, I weep for pride, and smiled all over his face! "A born actor!" I said, although Joey was to shame! He was graceful and natural; he spoke his lines with ease, the stage roses, his cheeks, untouched by rouge, put the reddest of them saw in my life. He was about ten or eleven at the time, and as he tied up mind with one of the most beautiful sights upon the stage that I ever It is because of Teddy that "Eugene Aram" is associated in my he played an important part in "The Dead Heart."

both that and Joey in "Eugene Aram," say he never appeared at all until must be counted his *first* appearance, although the chroniclers, ignoring still a mere baby, come on to the stage at the Court in "Olivia," and this second appearance on any stage as Joey, a gardener's boy. He had, when was quite splendid in it, and at Chicago my little boy Teddy made his with success. There the part of Houseman was played by Terriss, who The play was a good repertory play, and we did it later on in America. ated his methods when reciting in a room, making it all less theatrical. suggestion or less obstinate about taking advice. He immediately moder- was *too much* for a room. No man was ever more willing to listen to supper, anywhere. We had a talk about it once, and I told him that it well in a frock-coat! He was always ready to recite it, would do it after the play, especially when he did it in a frock-coat. No one ever looked so tation of the poem "Eugene Aram" was finer than anything he did in peculiar fascination for him, especially in these early days. But his rec- He played all such parts well. Melancholy and the horrors had a dark mass did you see that it was a man.

as the curtain went up on the last act. Not until a moonbeam struck the the churchyard. On one of them Henry used to be lying in a black cloak In "Eugene Aram," the Fate Tree drooped low over the graves in Fate. He called it the Fate Tree, and used it in "Hamlet," in "Eugene Aram," and in "Romeo and Juliet."

tion of grim and poetic effect. Henry always thought that the dark, overhanging branch of the cedar was like the cruel outstretched hand of "Ravenswood," gave me opportunity. It was staged with a great apprecia- what there was, was worth doing. The last act, like the last act of As Ruth Meadows in "Eugene Aram" I had very little to do, but

like. because even at our worst the public found *something* in our acting to and chose to keep the army marching! The play ran some time, I suppose superb effect. The curtain used to go up and down as often as we liked ing round the back-cloth to cross the stage again and again—created a- ently unending army—that good old trick which sends the supers fly-

"I'm not to say anything about it."

"It's in Shakespeare!"

"I'm not to tell."

"But I know. I've been thinking it out. It's 'The Merchant of Venice.'"

"Nothing is settled yet. It's on the cards."

"I know! I know!" said wise old Charles. "Well, you'll never have such a good part as Philippa Chester!"

"No, Nelly, never!" said Mrs Seymour, who happened to overhear this. "They call Philippa a Rosalind part. Rosalind! Rosalind is not to be compared with it!"

Between Mrs Seymour and Charles Reade there existed a friendship of that rare sort about which it is easy for people who are not at all rare, unfortunately, to say ill-natured things. Charles Reade worshipped Laura Seymour, and she understood him and sympathised with his work and his whims. She died before he did, and he never got over it. The great success of one of his last plays, "Drink," an adaptation from the French, in which Charles Warner is still thrilling audiences to this day, meant nothing to him because she was not alive to share it. The epitaph which he had inscribed over her grave is characteristic of the man, the woman, and their friendship:

HERE LIES THE GREAT HEART OF
LAURA SEYMOUR

I liked Mrs Seymour so much that I was hurt when I found that she had instructed Charles Reade to tell Nelly Terry "not to paint her face" in the daytime, and I was young enough to enjoy revenging myself in my own way. We used to play childish games at Charles Reade's house sometimes, and with "Follow my leader" came my opportunity. I asked for a basin of water and a towel and scrubbed my face with a significant thoroughness. The rules of the game meant that every one had to follow my example! When I had dried my face I powdered it, and then darkened my eyebrows. I wished to be quite frank about the harmless little bit of artifice which Mrs Seymour had exaggerated. She was now hoist with her own petard, for, being heavily made up, she could not and would not follow the leader. After this, Charles Reade acquitted me of the use of "pigments red," but he still kept up a campaign against "Chalky," as he humorously christened my powder-puff. "Dont be pig-headed, love," he wrote to me once; "it is because Chalky does not improve you that I forbid it. Trust unprejudiced and friendly eyes and drop it altogether."

Although Mrs Seymour was naturally prejudiced where Charles Reade's work was concerned, she only spoke the truth, pardonably ex-

the last act, a great playwright. It gave us both wonderful opportunities, yet very few words were spoken. Some people thought me at my best in the camp scene in the third act, where I had even fewer lines to speak. I was proud of it myself when I found that it had inspired Oscar Wilde to write me this lovely sonnet:

In the lone tent, waiting for victory,
 She stands with eyes marred by the mists of pain,
 Like some wan lily overdrunk with rain;
 The clamorous clang of arms, the ensanguined sky,
 War's ruin, and the wreck of chivalry
 To her proud soul no common fear can bring;
 Bravely she tarrieth for her Lord, the King,
 Her soul aflame with passionate ecstasy.
 O, hair of gold! O, crimson lips! O, face
 Made for the luring and the love of man!
 With thee I do forget the toil and stress,
 The loveless road that knows no resting place,
 Time's straitened pulse, the soul's dread weariness,
 My freedom, and my life republican!

That phrase "wan lily" represented perfectly what I had tried to convey, not only in this part but in Ophelia. I hope I thanked Oscar enough at the time. Now he is dead, and I cannot thank him any more.... I had so much *bad* poetry written to me that these lovely sonnets from a real poet should have given me the greater pleasure. "He often has the poet's heart, who never felt the poet's fire." There is more good *heart* and kind feeling in most of the verses written to me than real poetry. "One must discriminate," even if it sounds unkind. At the time that Whistler was having one of his most undignified "rows" with a sitter over a portrait and wrangling over the price, another artist was painting frescoes in a cathedral for nothing. "It may be sad that it should be so," a friend said to me, "but *one must discriminate*. The man haggling over the sixpence is the greater artist!"

§ 8

ANOTHER sonnet from Oscar Wilde—to Portia this time—is the first document that I find in connection with "The Merchant," as the play was always called by the theatre staff.

I marvel not Bassanio was so bold
 To peril all he had upon the lead,
 Or that proud Aragon bent low his head,
 Or that Morocco's fiery heart grew cold;

Elation, triumph, being lifted on high by a single stroke of the mighty wing of glory—call it by any name, think of it as you like—it was as Portia that I had my first and last sense of it. And, while it made me happy, it made me miserable because I foresaw, as plainly as my own success, another's failure.

Charles Coghlan, an actor whose previous record was fine enough to justify his engagement as Shylock, showed that night the fatal quality of *indecision*.

A worse performance than his, carried through with decision and attack, might have succeeded, but Coghlan's Shylock was not even bad. It was *nothing*.

You could hardly hear a word he said. He spoke as though he had a sponge in his mouth, and moved as if paralysed. The perspiration poured down his face; yet what he was doing no one could guess. It was a case of moral cowardice rather than incompetency. At rehearsals no one had entirely believed in him, and this, instead of stinging him into a resolution to triumph, had made him take fright and run away.

People felt that they were witnessing a great play with a great part cut out, and "The Merchant of Venice" ran for three weeks!

It was a pity, if only because a more gorgeous and complete little spectacle had never been seen on the English stage. Veronese's "Marriage in Cana" had inspired many of the stage pictures, and the expenditure in carrying them out had been lavish.

In the casket scene I wore a dress like almond-blossom. I was very thin, but Portia and all the ideal *young* heroines of Shakespeare ought to be thin. Fat is fatal to romance!

I played the part more stiffly and more slowly at the Prince of Wales's than I did in later years. I moved and spoke slowly. The clothes seemed to demand it, and the setting of the play developed the Italian feeling in it, and let the English Elizabethan element take care of itself. The silver casket scene with the Prince of Aragon was retained, and so was the last act, which had hitherto been cut out in nearly all stage versions.

I have tried five or six different ways of treating Portia, but the way I think best is not the one which finds the heartiest response from my audiences. Has there ever been a dramatist, I wonder, whose parts admit of so many different interpretations as do Shakespeare's? There lies his immortality as an acting force. For times change, and parts have to be acted differently for different generations. Some parts are not sufficiently universal for this to be possible, but every ten years an actor can reconsider a Shakespeare part and find new life in it for his new purpose and new audiences.

The æsthetic movement, with all its faults, was responsible for a great

My difficulty is this:—Why in the world did not Hero (or at any rate Beatrice on her behalf) prove an "alibi" in answer to the charge? It seems certain that she did *not* sleep in her room that night; for how could Margaret venture to open the window and talk from it, with her mistress asleep in the room? It would be sure to wake her. Besides Borachio says, after promising that Margaret shall speak with him out of Hero's chamber window, "I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent." (*How* he could possibly manage any such thing is another difficulty, but I pass over that.) Well then, granting that Hero slept in some other room that night, why didn't she say so? When Claudio asked her: "What man was he you talked with yesterday?" I talked at your window betwixt twelve and one?" Why doesn't she reply: "I talked with no man at that hour, my lord. Nor was I in my chamber yesterday, but in another, far from it, remote." And this she could, of course, prove by the

Now I'm going to put before you a "Hero-ic" puzzle of mine, but please remember I do not ask for your solution of it, as you will persist in believing, if I ask your help in a Shakespeare difficulty, that I am only jesting! However, if you won't attack it yourself, perhaps you would ask Mr Irving some day how *he* explains it?

some people make puzzles, anagrams, or Limericks!

Mr Dodgson was an ardent playgoer. He took the keenest interest in all the Lyceum productions, frequently writing to me to point out slips in the dramatist's logic which only he would ever have noticed! He did not even spare Shakespeare. I think he wrote these letters for fun, as later years with their children.

Mr Dodgson was one of my earliest friends among literary folk. I can't remember a time when I didn't know him. He saw Kate and me act as children, and gave us a copy of "Alice in Wonderland." He always gave any new young friend "Alice" at once. It was his way of following up the introduction and establishing pleasant relations. The "Alice" ceremony was gone through with every member of the Terry family, and in later years with their children.

Casket Scene over again.

But I felt ashamed and shy whenever I played that scene. It was the much more so when she sees it where harm is not."

"It would have seemed awful for a *child* to see harm where harm is; how "I thought you only knew *nice* children," was all the answer I gave him. of me as he could be of any one over the age of ten, but I was *furious*. I had known dear Mr Dodgson for years and years. He was as fond of business!

fact that it could affect a mere child disagreeably, I ought to alter my "Where is it going to stop?" and that perhaps, in consideration of the wrote and told me that she had said (where Margaret begins to undress): in "Wonderland") once brought a little girl to see me in "Faust." He

I HAVE read in some of the biographies of me that have been published from time to time, that I was chagrined at Coghlan's fiasco because it brought my success as Portia so soon to an end. As a matter of fact, I never thought about it. I was just sorry for clever Coghlan, who was deeply hurt and took his defeat hardly and moodily. He wiped out the public recollection of it to a great extent by his Evelyn in "Money," his Sir Charles Romander in "Masks and Faces," and his Claude Melnotte in "The Lady of Lyons," which he played with me at the Princess's Theatre

§ 3

The audiences may have been scanty, but they were wonderful. O'Shaughnessy, Watts-Dunton, Oscar Wilde, Alfred Gilbert, and, I think, Swinburne were there. A poetic and artistic atmosphere pervaded the front of the house as well as the stage itself.

hold your talents from their proper sphere." other Shakespearean characters, and that nothing will tempt you to with- as I had always hoped she might be. I hope that I shall see you again in been my favourite heroine, and I saw her last night as sweet and lovely pleasure, and I write to offer you my poor thanks. Portia has always of receiving must always be worth doing. You have given me that but to give to human beings the greatest pleasure that they are capable "Playing to such houses," he wrote, "is not an encouraging pursuit; about "The Merchant of Venice" from some unknown friend.

There turns up today, out of a long-neglected box, a charming note have been stronger, if they *had* been able to help it. simple truth. I, for one, should have been poorer, though my eyes might begin: "I cannot help writing to tell you," and I believe that this is the complain of it. To some people expression is life itself. Half my letters letters has been a heavy one all my life, but it would be ungrateful to filled me can never be destroyed. The task of reading and answering ago, but the feeling of sweetness and light with which some of them known and unknown. Most of the letters written to me I destroyed long Every one seemed to be in love with me! I had sweethearts by the dozen, Short as the run of the play was, it was a wonderful time for me. nothing came of it.

Fredrick Leighton and others made the proposal to the Bancrofts, but Sir Fredrick and Lady Pollock, James Spedding, Edwin Arnold, Sir going by subscription, as the general public was not supporting them. tion which took the practical form of an offer to keep the performances the Bancrofts' production of "The Merchant of Venice" with an apprecia- deal of true enthusiasm for anything beautiful. It made people welcome

"N." has since achieved great success on the music-halls and in pantomime. "D." is a leading lady!

This letter to my sister Floss is characteristic of his "Wonderland" style when writing to children:

My Dear FLORENCE,—

Ever since that heartless piece of conduct of yours (I allude to the affair of the Moon and the blue silk gown) I have regarded you with a gloomy interest, rather than with any of the affection of former years—so that the above epithet "dear" must be taken as conventional only, or perhaps may be more fully taken in the sense in which we talk of a "dear" bargain, meaning to imply how much it has cost us; and who shall say how many sleepless nights it has cost me to endeavour to unravel (a most appropriate verb) that "blue silk gown"?

Will you please explain to Tom about that photograph of the family group which I promised him? Its history is an instructive one, as illustrating my habits of care and deliberation. In 1867 the picture was promised him, and an entry made in my book. In 1869, or thereabouts, I mounted the picture on a large card, and packed it in brown paper. In 1870, or 1871, or thereabouts, I took it with me to Guilford, that it might be handy to take with me when I went up to town. Since then I have taken it two or three times to London, and on each occasion (having forgotten to deliver it to him) I brought it back again. This was because I had no convenient place in London to leave it in. But *now* I have found such a place. Mr Dubourg has kindly taken charge of it—so that it is now much nearer to its future owner than it has been for seven years. I quite hope, in the course of another year or two, to be able to remember to bring it to your house: or perhaps Mr Dubourg may be calling even sooner than that and take it with him. You will wonder why I ask you to tell him instead of writing myself. The obvious reason is that you will be able, from sympathy, to put my delay in the most favourable light—to make him see that, as hasty puddings are not the best of puddings, so hasty judgments are not the best of judgments, and that he ought to be content to wait even another seven years for his picture, and to sit "like patience on a monument, smiling at grief." This quotation, by the way, is altogether a misprint. Let me explain it to you. The passage originally stood, "*They sit like patients on the Monument, smiling at Greenh.*" In the next edition "*Greenwich*" was printed short, "*Green*," and so got gradually altered into "*grief*." The allusion of course is to the celebrated Dr Jenner, who used to send all his patients to sit on top of the Monument (near London Bridge) to inhale fresh air, promising them that, when they were well enough, they should go to "*Greenwich Fair*." So of course they always looked out towards Greenwich, and sat smiling to think of the treat in store for them. A play was written on the subject of their inhaling the fresh air, and it was for some time attributed to Shakespeare, but it is certainly not in his style. It was called "*The Wandering Air*," and was lately revived at the Queen's

for one night only in the August following the withdrawal of "The Merchant of Venice."

I have been credited with great generosity for appearing in that single performance of "The Lady of Lyons." It was said that I wanted to help Coghlan to reinstate himself, and so on. Very likely there was some such feeling in the matter, but there was also a good part and good remuneration! I remember that I played Lytton's proud heroine better than I did at the Lyceum five years later, and Coghlan was more successful as Melnotte than Henry Irving. But I was never really good in the part. I tried in vain to have sympathy with a lady who was addressed as "haughty cousin," yet whose very pride had so much inconsistency. How could any woman fall in love with a cad like Melnotte, I used to ask myself despairingly. The very fact that I tried to understand Pauline was against me. There is only one way to play her, and to be distracted by questions of sincerity and consistency means that you will miss that way for a certainty!

I missed it, and fell between two stools. Finding that it was useless to depend upon feeling, I groped after the definite rules which had always governed the delivery of Pauline's fustian, and the fate that commonly overtakes those who try to put old wine into new bottles overtook me.

I knew, for instance, exactly how the following speech ought to be done, but I never could do it. It occurs in the fourth act, where Beauséant, after Pauline has been disillusioned, thinks it will be an easy matter to induce the proud beauty to fly with him:

"Go! (*White to the lips.*) Sir, leave this house! It is humble; but a husband's roof, however lowly, is, in the eyes of God and man, the temple of a wife's honour. (*Tumultuous applause.*) Know that I would rather starve—aye, *starve*—with him who has betrayed me than accept *your* lawful hand, even were you the prince whose name he bore. (*Hurrying on quickly to prevent applause before the finish.*) Go!"

It is easy to laugh at Lytton's rhetoric, but very few dramatists have had a more complete mastery of theatrical situations, and that is a good thing to be master of. Why the word "theatrical" should have come to be used in a contemptuous sense I cannot understand. "Musical" is a word of praise in music; why not "theatrical" in a theatre? A play in any age which holds the boards so continuously as "The Lady of Lyons" deserves more recognition than the ridicule of those who think that the world has moved on because our playwrights write more naturally than Lytton wrote. The merit of the play lay, not in its bombast, but in its situations.

floundering out of your depths tonight on the subject of butterflies! The man to whom you were talking is one of the greatest entomologists in Europe, and must have seen through you at once."

When William Black's "Madcap Violet" was published, common report said that the heroine had been drawn from Ellen Terry, and some of the reviews made Taylor furious.

"It's disgraceful! I shall deny it. Never will I let it be said of you that you could conceive any vulgarity. I shall write and contradict it. Indiscreet, high-spirited, full of surprises, you may be, but vulgar—never! I shall write at once."

"Don't do that," I said. "Can't you see that the author hasn't described me, but only men in 'New Men and Old Acres'?" As this was Tom Taylor's own play, his rage against "Madcap Violet" was very funny! "There am I, just as you wrote it. My actions, manners, and clothes in the play are all reproduced. You ought to feel pleased, not angry."

When his play "Victims" was being rehearsed at the Court Theatre, an old woman and old actress who had, I think, been in the preceding play was not wanted. The day the management gave her her dismissal, she met Taylor outside the theatre, and poured out a long story of distress. She had not a stocking to her foot, she owed her rent, she was starving. Wouldn't Mr Taylor tell the management what dismissal meant to her? Wouldn't he get her taken back? Mr Taylor would try, and Mr Taylor gave her fifteen pounds in the street then and there! Mrs Taylor wasn't surprised. She only wondered it wasn't thirty!

"Tom the Adapter" was the Terry dramatist for many years. Kate played in many of the pieces which, some openly, some deviously, he brought into the English theatre from the French. When Kate married, my turn came, and the interest that he had taken in my sister's talent he transferred in part to me, although I don't think he ever thought me her equal. Floss made her first appearance in the child's part in Taylor's play "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing," and Marion her first appearance as Ophelia in his version of "Hamlet"—perhaps "perverse" would be an honest description! Taylor introduced a "fool" who went about whacking people, including the Prince, by way of brightening up the tragedy. I never saw my sister's Ophelia, but I know it was a fine send-off for her and that she must have looked lovely. Oh, what a pretty young girl she was! Her golden-brown eyes exactly matched her hair, and she was the winsomest thing imaginable. From Taylor's letters have forgotten—that the interests. "I have recommended."

"I have written to try."

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"The Merchant of Venice" was acted two hundred and fifty consecutive nights on the occasion of the first production. On the hundredth night every member of the audience was presented with Henry Irving's acting edition of the play bound in white vellum—a solid and permanent souvenir, paper, print and binding all being of the best. The famous Chiswick Press did all his work of this kind. On the title page was printed:

I count myself in nothing else so happy

As in a soul remembering my good friends.

At the close of the performance which took place on Saturday, February 14, 1880, Henry entertained a party of 350 to supper on the stage. This was the first of those enormous gatherings which afterwards became an institution at the Lyceum.

It was at this supper that Lord Houghton surprised us all by making a very sarcastic speech about the stage and actors generally. It was no doubt more interesting than the "butcher" which is usually applied to the profession at such functions, but every one felt that it was rather rude to abuse long runs when the company were met to celebrate a hundredth performance!

Henry Irving's answer was delightful. He spoke with good sense, good humour and good breeding, and it was all spontaneous. I wish that a phonograph had been in existence that night, and that a record had been taken of the speech. It would be so good for the people who have asserted that Henry Irving always employed journalists (when he could not get Poets Laureate!) to write his speeches for him! The voice was always the voice of Irving, if the hands were sometimes the hands of the professional writer. When Henry was thrown on his debating resources he really spoke better than when he prepared a speech, and his letters prove, if proof were needed, how finely he could write! Those who represent him as dependent in such matters on the help of literary hacks are just ignorant of the facts.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. *Longridge Road*. Although Ellen Terry received a good salary at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and a better one at the Court, she appears to have been hard up for some time after leaving her home in Tavistock Street. She writes in Chapter VI of living in lodgings at Camden Town and going to the Prince of Wales's by "bus. There is evidence she had borrowed money in the rainy days, and when the fine ones came she lived carefully, cheaply, and humbly, still feeling the pinch of poverty, until she had paid her debts. From

Bassanio." (Evidently this was in answer to a request from me. Naturally the Bancrofts wanted some one of higher standing, but was I wrong about J. Forbes-Robertson? I think not!) "The mother came to see me the other day. I was extremely sorry to hear the bad news of Tom.' (Tom was the black sheep of our family, but a fascinating wretch, all the same.) "I rejoice to think of your coming back," he writes another time, "to show the stage what an actress should be." "A thousand thanks for the photographs. I like the profile best. It is most Paolo Veronesish and gives the right notion of your Portia, although the colour hardly suggests the golden gorgeousness of your dress and the blonde glory of the hair and complexion.... I hope you have seen the quiet little boxes at ——'s foolish article." (This refers to an article which attacked my Portia in *Blackwood's Magazine*.) "Of course, if —— found his ideal in —— he must dislike you in Portia, or in anything where it is a case of grace and spontaneity and Nature against affectation, over-emphasis, stilt, and false idealism—in short, utter lack of Nature. How *can* the same critic admire both? However, the public is with you, happily, as it is not always when the struggle is between good art and bad."

I quote these dear letters from my friend, not in my praise, but in his. Until his death in 1880, he never ceased to write to me sympathetically and encouragingly; he rejoiced in my success the more because he had felt himself in part responsible for my marriage and its unhappy ending, and had perhaps feared that my life would suffer. Every little detail about me and my children, or about any of my family, was of interest to him. He was never too busy to give an attentive ear to my difficulties. "Think of you lovingly if I can!" he writes to me at a time when I had taken a course for which all blamed me, perhaps because they did not know enough to pardon enough—*savoir tout c'est tout pardonner*. "Can I think of you otherwise than lovingly? *Never*, if I know you and myself!"

Tom Taylor got through an enormous amount of work. Dramatic critic and art critic for the *Times*, he was also editor of *Punch* and a busy playwright. Every one who wanted an address written or a play altered came to him, and his house was a kind of Mecca for pilgrims from America and from all parts of the world. Yet he all the time occupied a position in a Government office, and often walked from Whitehall to Lavender Sweep when his day's work was done. He was an enthusiastic amateur actor, his favourite part being Adam in "As You Like It," perhaps because tradition says this was a part that Shakespeare played; at any rate, he was very good in it. Gilbert and Sullivan, in very far-off days, used to be concerned in these amateur theatricals. Their names were not associated then, but Kate and I established a prophetic link by carrying on a mild flirtation, I with Arthur Sullivan, Kate with W. S. Gilbert!

correction of Ellen Terry's mistake had been made in a far from amiable courteous reference to Mr Ball, as he was a peppery little man, and his our music for Faust." There was possibly an intentional touch of irony in this forgive me for having forgotten for the moment that it was he who wrote he (Mr Ball) is one of the most amiable of created men, I know he will O'Connor) to point out the slip, and Ellen Terry sent a letter of apology: "As this chapter appeared in "M. A. P.," Mr Ball wrote to the Editor (the late T.P. posed by Meredith Ball, Hamilton Clarke's successor at the Lyceum. When incidental music for "Faust," including that for the "Broken" scene, was com-

5. *The Broken Music in "Faust."* Ellen Terry made a slip here. The as Ophelia. It bears the inscription: "To the Divine Ophelia of Drury Lane." One of the best of Gordon Craig's early woodcuts represents Ellen Terry "just damnable" conflicts with her son's impression that she was marvellous. when she played Ophelia at Drury Lane for the last time in 1896 she was 4. *Ellen Terry's last appearance as Ophelia.* Ellen Terry's opinion that take! But there is always work!"

when hopes goes. I have always felt people were worth it. Perhaps 'my mis- matters, in big matters. I must hope to the end. That will be my end— suppose I could dream again, but I could never give up hoping—in little "I love to work, and I love to dream. I had my dream night off. Foolish to recently in one of her notebooks:

More light is thrown on her attitude to her work by this confession found lasted for over twenty years.

partnerships were of short duration, her artistic partnership with Irving she left its management to others. It is significant that while her domestic imagined she was a good housewife, yet her home was best ordered when home nursing her energy for rehearsals and performances in the theatre. She she was a home-loving person, yet she spent the greater part of her time at life. For its sake she "scorned delights and lived laborious days." She imagined of her "art," but of her "work" was always the most important thing in her a brief period in her youth, her work (like Eleanora Duse, she never spoke whom Ellen Terry herself believed, with the Ellen Terry of fact. Except for human being. It is impossible to identify this theoretical Ellen Terry, in would have been quite ready at any time to sacrifice it to her life as a that she was not devoted heart and soul to her vocation as an actress, and correspondents, Bernard Shaw, have both helped to fix it in people's minds) who knew her well (her son Gordon Craig and one of her most famous and the passage in which it occurs confirms the impression given by many 3. *More Woman than Arist.* Ellen Terry honestly thought this was true, chapter covering that period.

Irving-Terry partnership was finally broken, it has been appended to the of the Lyceum, and describes the situation in 1903 when the long and famous Terry at various dates, but as it deals mainly with Irving in the last days Chapter XIII. This gives a more complete study of him, compiled by Ellen ager, in the pages of Ellen Terry's book are amplified in the appendix to

When Tom Taylor criticised acting he wrote as an expert, and he Enemies."

those who like mordant ridicule, in "The Gentle Art of Making controversy of which I forget the details, but they are all set out, for He put himself at the mercy of Whistler, once, in some Velasquez whose name, no doubt, will live longer.

age, and so was more prominent in it than Charles Reade, for instance, That was his weakness—if it was a weakness. He lived entirely for his his really fine accomplishment as a playwright for ever on adaptations. haps a man of more independence and ambition would not have wasted Taylor would not have condescended to "write up" Shakespeare; per-Polly as Ophelia. Perhaps a man with more acute literary conscience than actor who played that odd version of "Hamlet" at the Crystal Palace with Mazzini stayed there for some time, and Steele Mackaye, the American Lavender Sweep was a sort of house of call for every one of note.

laughed, and laughed! soft felt hat bashed over one eye, his spectacles broken, and laughed, and seemed to attribute our descent to rowdiness. Taylor stood up with his steps. "Now, then, none of your jokes!" said a cross man behind us, who on to one arm and I on to the other, we all three fell down the station Once, when we were rushing to catch a train with him, Kate hanging that it was possible for every one to have a good time.

Lavender Sweep arose from his generous, kindly nature, which insisted lovable a being to be great. The atmosphere of gaiety which pervaded think his heart was too strong for his brain. He was far too simple and I Taylor did not write "so little." He wrote perhaps too much, and I answer.

"Ah, but then, Charles Lamb wrote so little!" was the remarkable for so many years.

Perhaps Charles Lamb was all the better for being a slave at the desk was never sure whether absolute freedom in such a matter was desirable, and devote herself entirely to a literary career. I wondered, and said I ing forward to the time when she would be able to give up teaching written some charming short stories, told me how eagerly she was look-all depends on the point of view. A young lady in Chicago, who has Lamb at East India House, and Rousseau copying music for bread? It achieving anything. What about Taylor at the Home Office, Charles living in some other and more secure profession hinders them from paper. Many would-be writers complain that the necessity of earning a realised that he was just as busy as if his pen had been plucking at his the time; and when I used to watch him plucking at his grey beard, I Taylor never wasted a moment. He pottered, but thought deeply all

made records later when the device of reproducing them from the matrix had been invented, but they are all unsatisfactory, even when judged by the standard of the time, and give no idea of the quality of her voice.

9. *Ellen Terry's Portia*. There is a vast amount of evidence of the long and profound study Ellen Terry gave to her parts. She continued to give it, long after they had become old parts. I have found a cutting from an Italian essay on "The Merchant of Venice," dated 1903, with comments in her writing which shows she was still interested in anything which threw new light on the play. The writer of the article made the ingenious suggestion that the song in the Casket Scene: "Tell me where is fancy bred" had been deliberately selected by Portia in order to guide Bassanio to the choice of the right casket. "I like this idea," writes Ellen Terry. "And why shouldn't Portia sing the song herself? She could make the four rhymes, 'bred, head, nourished, fed,' set the word 'lead' ringing in Bassanio's ears. A woman of Portia's sort couldn't possibly remain passive in such a crisis in her life."

10. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter VII were: Ophelia ("Hamlet," 1878); Lady Anne ("Richard III," Act I, 1879); Ruth Meadowes ("Eugene Aram," 1879); Henrietta Maria ("Charles I," 1879); Frou-Frou ("Buenafly," 1879); Iolanthe ("Iolanthe," 1880); Bearice ("Much Ado About Nothing," at Leeds, 1880).

often said illuminating things to me about actors and actresses which I could apply over again to some of the players with whom I have been associated since. "She is a curious example," he said once of an actress of great conscientiousness, "of how far seriousness, sincerity, and weight will supply the place of almost all the other qualities of an actress." When a famous classic actress reappeared as Rosalind, he described her performance as "all minute-guns and *minauderies*, . . . a foot between every word, and the intensity of the emphasis entirely destroying all the spontaneity and flow of spirits which alone excuse and explain; . . . as unlike Shakespeare's Rosalind, I will stake my head, as human personation could be!"

There was some talk at that time (the early 'seventies) of my playing Rosalind at Manchester for Mr Charles Calvert, and Tom Taylor urged me to do it. "Then," he said charmingly, "I can sing my stage Nunc Dimittis." The whole plan fell through, including a project for me to star as Juliet to the Romeo of a lady!

I have already said that the Taylors' home was one of the most softening and culturing influences of my early life. Would that I could give an impression of the dear host at the head of his dinner-table, dressed in black silk knee-breeches and velvet cutaway coat—a survival of a politer time, not an affectation of it—beaming on his guests with his *very* brown eyes!

Lavender is still associated in my mind with everything that is lovely and refined. My mother nearly always wore the colour, and the Taylors lived at Lavender Sweep! This may not be an excellent reason for my feelings on the subject, but it is reason good enough.

"Nature repairs her ravages," it is said, but not all. New things come into one's life—new loves, new joys, new interests, new friends—but they cannot replace the old. When Tom Taylor died, I lost a friend the like of whom I never had again.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. *Ellen Terry's entrances*. Ellen Terry's reference to her suggestion to Henry Irving that he should make "a more swift entrance on the stage from the dressing-room" is interesting. Her custom of leaving her entrance to the very last moment, which often filled lookers-on in her dressing-room with nervous terror that she would be late, and drove the call-boy at the Lyceum to fib about the nearness of her cue—"They're at the quarrel scene, now, Miss Terry" and so on—was wrongly attributed to mere recklessness. She had a very good reason for it as this passage proves.

2. *Portia in 1875*. After the publication of "Childe Harold" Byron woke one morning to find himself famous. Ellen Terry had a similar experience

after her first appearance as Portia. There was never any question after this appearance that she was an actress of the first rank, yet many stage historians give the impression that her career before Henry Irving engaged her as his leading lady in 1878 was insignificant, and that it is improbable she would have achieved a great position apart from Irving. Ellen Terry, who never over-rated her successes, says that as Portia at the Prince of Wales's she had her first and last sense of "being lifted on high by a single stroke of the mighty wing of glory," and contemporary accounts of her triumph make the statement perfectly credible. Yet today Portia is reckoned a second-rate part, and if actresses fail to make much of it, Shakespeare is blamed. A Portia about whom poets, painters and scholars raved is inconceivable in 1932. A painter (Graham Robertson) writes that Ellen Terry was *par excellence* "the Painter's Actress," and appealed to the eye before the ear; her gesture and pose were eloquence itself. "Her charm held every one but I think pre-eminently those who loved pictures." This throws some light on the subjugation of the painters in the audience at the Prince of Wales's. The poets were probably entranced by hearing the true Shakespearean music. The scholars? Well, they may have been struck by the young actress's penetration into the meaning of the words behind the music. And all, ordinary play-going men and women as well as the artists, fell in love with the enchanting personality of the new Portia.

3. *The Private Life of Portia*. The house at which Mrs Bancroft called to offer Ellen Terry the part of Portia was in Tavilton Street. It had been decorated and furnished with great care by Edward Godwin, while Ellen Terry was on tour with Charles Reade, but by the date of Mrs Bancroft's visit, the brokers had made it a desert. In describing the interview with Mrs Bancroft, in her book, Ellen Terry forgot a little detail she always remembered when telling the story to her children. "When Mrs Bancroft saw the Venus, she ejaculated 'Dear me!' in her best comedy manner, and, really rather startled by the enormous size of the cast, made the farcically shocked gesture of putting her hand to her eyes."

It was at Tavilton Street that Ellen Terry's final breach with Edward Godwin occurred. Hence her allusion to domestic troubles. I have the authority of an old friend of Godwin's for the story that in "a fit of pique" he left the house, and soon afterwards married Miss Beatrice Phillips, one of his pupils, a young girl still at school. She was the daughter of John Bernie Phillips, the sculptor who executed the frieze on the podium of the Albert Memorial. There is further evidence of that self-confessed inability of Ellen Terry's to sustain a resentment, by which her first husband benefited, in her subsequent attitude towards Edward Godwin. Admiration for it remains unaffected by the consideration that there may have been faults on both sides. If Godwin was not "an easy person to live with," neither was Ellen Terry, as the history of her marriages proves. Writing to a friend of the Harpenden days she had met unexpectedly again after a twenty years' separation, she says: "The times, of which you were part, were my best times, my happiest times. I can never think of him but at his best, and when he died, he thought only

some one in the audience sneezed. Every one burst out laughing, and I had to laugh too. I did not even attempt the next line. "The Cup" was called a failure, yet it ran 125 nights, and every night the house was crowded! On the hundredth night I sent Tennyson the Cup itself. I had it made in silver from Mr Godwin's design—a three-handled cup, pippin-shaped, standing on three legs.

Moon, bring him home, bring him home,
Safe from the dark and the cold,

The music of "The Cup" was not up to the level of the rest. Lady Winchilsea's setting of "Moon on the field and the foam," written within the compass of eight notes, for my poor singing voice, which will not go up high nor down low, was effective enough, but the music as a whole was too "charity" for a severe tragedy. One night when I was singing my very best:

I quite agree with you as to H. I.'s Synorix.

HALLAM TENNYSON.

Yours ever sincerely,

With all our best wishes.

DEAR CAMILLA, he answered, I have given your messages to my father, but believe me, who am not 'common report,' that he will thoroughly appreciate your noble, *most* beautiful and imaginative rendering of 'Camma.' My father and myself hope to see you soon, but not while this detestable cold weather lasts. We trust that you are not now really the worse for that night of nights.

I wrote to Tennyson's son Hallam, after the first night, that I knew his father would be delighted with Henry's splendid performance, but was afraid he would be disappointed in me.

The first act was well within my means; the second was beyond them, but it was very good for me to try and do it. I had a long apostrophe to the goddess with my back turned to the audience, and I never tackled anything more difficult. My dresses, designed by Mr Godwin, one of them with the toga made of that wonderful material which Arnott had printed, were simple, fine and free.

With a pale, pale face, bright red hair, gold armour and a tiger-skin, a diabolical expression and very thin crimson lips, Henry looked handsome and sickening at the same time. *Lechery* was written across his forehead. How he failed to delight in it as a picture I can't conceive. as Synorix! Tennyson was not pleased with him ally with barbarian cruelty and lust. Tennyson was not pleased with him so he conceived his own type of the blend of Roman intellect and sensu- Romans such as we see in long lines in marble at the British Museum,

so of me. I could never suffer again I think as I have suffered, but I joy in the remembrance of him. He loved me, and I loved him, and that, I suppose, is the reason we so cruelly hurt each other. He went away and shut the door after him. It seems like that to me, but *he knows*."

Well might the friend who was honoured with this confidence reply: "If I wish to express the friendship I feel for you it is not because you are a great actress, perhaps the greatest, but because you are a woman who has preserved uninjured by time whatever was good in the past with a deep tenderness and undying remembrance, letting what was evil vanish." The date of these letters is 1890, four years after Edward Godwin's death.

After the separation he continued to design Ellen Terry's dresses. In her archives there is a delightful little note from him, written during a performance of "The Cup" at the Lyceum. It is illustrated by drawings of the attitudes that are, and are not, archæologically justified in an actress representing a Greek priestess of the period of the play. "This, and this, but never *that*."

Godwin's grave is at Norleigh, near Witney in Oxfordshire. No stone marks it as he was known by his friends to have a strong objection to grave-stones. For many years the late Lady Archibald Campbell, a devout admirer of Godwin's (he directed the once famous performances by the "Pastoral Players" in her park at Coombe in which she took part) made the grave her care. An anonymous sonnet, the manuscript of which was preserved by Ellen Terry with other relics may have been published at the time of his death, but I have been unable to find it in print. It is printed now as an appropriate epitaph for "an inheritor of unfulfilled renown."

A man of men, born to be genial King,
By frank election of the artist kind,
Attempting all things, and on anything
Setting the signet of a master mind.
What others dreamed amiss, he did aright:
His dreams were visions of art's golden age;
Yet self-betrayed, he fell in Fortune's spite,
His royal birthright sold for scanty wage.
The best of comrades, winning old and young.
With keen audacious charm, dandling the fool
That pleased his humour, but with scathing tongue
For blatant pedants of the bungler school.
They tell me he had faults—I know of one:
Dying too soon, he left his best undone.

There is something ironical in the fact that in a very few years Edward William Godwin's memory survived only because his widow married James McNeill Whistler. Ellen Terry was prohibited by the strange code of manners and morals which regulated the society in which she grew up from paying any public tribute to that memory. What she could not do for herself in life her daughter and I have tried after her death to do for her, feeling certain our effort will command sympathy in an age with a less hypocritical standard of discretion than the one its immediate predecessor set up. The reader who

"No," I used to answer, "but it isn't a song. It's a look here, a gesture there, a laugh anywhere, *and* Henry Irving's face everywhere!"

Miss Winifred Emery came to us for "The Belle's Stratagem" and played the part that I had played years before at the Haymarket. She was bewitching, and in her white wig in the ball-room, beautiful as well. She knew how to bear herself on the stage instinctively, and could dance a minuet to perfection. The daughter of Sam Emery, a great comedian in a day of great comedians, and the granddaughter of *the* Emery, it was not surprising that she should show aptitude for the stage.

Mr Howe was another new arrival in the Lyceum company. He was at his funniest as Mr Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem." It was not the first time that he had played my father in a piece (we had acted father and daughter in "The Little Treasure"), and I always called him "Daddy." The dear old man was much liked by every one. He had a tremendous pair of legs, was bluff and bustling in manner, though courtly too, and cared more about gardening than acting. He had a little farm at Isleworth and because of this and of his stout gaitered legs, Henry called him "the agricultural actor." He was a good old port and whiskey drinker, but he could carry his liquor like a Regency man.

He was a walking history of the stage. "Yes, my dear," he used to say to me, "I was in the original cast of the first performance of 'The Lady of Lyons,' which Lord Lytton gave Macready as a present, and I was the original François when 'Richelieu' was produced. Lord Lytton wrote this part for a lady, but at rehearsal it was found that there was a good deal of movement awkward for a lady to do, so I was put into it."

"What year was it, Daddy?"

"God bless me, I must think.... It must have been about a year after Her Majesty took the throne."

For forty years and nine months Daddy Howe had acted at the Haymarket Theatre! When he was first there, the theatre was lighted with oil lamps, and when a lamp smoked or went out, one of the servants of the theatre came on and lighted it up again during the action of the play.

Of Henry Irving as an actor Howe once said to me that at first he was prejudiced against him because he was so different from the other great actors that he had known.

"This isn't a bit like Iago," I said to myself when I first saw him in 'Othello.' That was at the end of the first act. But he had commanded my attention to his innovations. In the second act I found myself deeply interested in watching and studying the development of his conception. In the third act I was fascinated by his originality. By the end of the

still adheres to this standard, would do well to ponder Ellen Terry's words: "Surely the world is always the better for having a little truth instead of a great deal of falsehood."

4. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter V were: Portia ("The Merchant of Venice," 1875); Clara Douglas ("Money," 1875); Mrs Honeyton ("A Happy Pair," 1875); Pauline ("The Lady of Lyons," 1875); Mabel Vane ("Masks and Faces," 1875).

your hand I shall have a corner of my drapery in my hand. That will protect you."

I am bound to say that I thought of Mr Booth's "protection" with some yearning the next week when I played Desdemona to *Henry's* Othello. Before he had done with me I was nearly as black as he. Booth was a melancholy, dignified Othello, but not great as Salvini was great. Salvini's Hamlet made me scream with mirth, but his Othello was the grandest, biggest, most glorious thing. We often prate of "reserved force;" Salvini had it, for the simple reason that his was the gigantic force which may be restrained because of its immensity. Men have no need to dam up a little purling brook. If they do it in acting, it is tame, absurd and pretentious. But Salvini held himself in, and still his groan was like a tempest, his passion huge.

The fact is that, apart from Salvini's personal genius, the foreign temperament is better fitted to deal with Othello than the English. Shakespeare's French and Italians, Greeks and Latins, medievals and barbarians, fancifuls and reals, all have a dash of Elizabethan Englishmen in them, but not Othello.

Booth's Othello was very helpful to my Desdemona. It is difficult to preserve the simple, heroic blindness of Desdemona to the fact that her lord mistrusts her, if her lord is raving and stamping under her nose! Booth was gentle in the scenes with Desdemona until the scene where Othello overwhelms her with the foul word and destroys her faith.

My greatest triumph as Desdemona was not gained with the audience but with Henry Irving! He found my endeavours to accept comfort from Iago so pathetic that they brought the tears to his eyes. It was the oddest sensation when I said "Oh, good Iago, what shall I do to win my lord again?" to look up—my own eyes dry, for Desdemona is past crying then—and see Henry's eyes at their biggest, and most luminous, soft and full of tears! He was, in spite of Iago and in spite of his power of identifying himself with the part, very deeply moved by my acting. But he knew how to turn it to his purpose: he obtrusively took the tears with his fingers and blew his nose with much feeling, softly and long (so much expression there is, by the way, in blowing the nose on the stage), so that the audience might think his emotion a fresh stroke of hypocrisy.

Every one liked Henry's Iago. For the first time in his life he knew what it was to win unanimous praise. Nothing could be better, I think, than Mr Walkley's¹ description: "Daringly Italian, a true compatriot of the Borgias, or rather, better than Italians, that devil incarnate, an Englishman Italianate."

One adored him, devil though he was. He was so full of charm, so

CHAPTER VI

EVENTFUL YEARS

(1876-1878)

§ I

My engagement with the Bancrofts lasted a little over a year. After Portia there was nothing momentous about it. I found Clara Douglas difficult, but I enjoyed playing her. I found Mabel Vane easy, and I enjoyed playing her, too, although there was less to be proud of in my success here. Almost any actress of average ability could have walked away with a part demanding such very simple womanly emotion. At this time friends who had fallen in love with Portia used to gather at the Prince of Wales's and applaud me in a manner more vigorous than judicious. It was their fault that it got about that I had hired a *claque* to clap me! Now, it seems funny, but at the time I was deeply hurt at the insinuation, and it cast a shadow over what would otherwise have been a very happy time.

It is the way of the public sometimes to keep all their enthusiasm for an actress who is doing well in a minor part, and to withhold it from the actress who is playing the leading part. I don't say for a minute that Mrs Bancroft's Peg Woffington in "Masks and Faces" was not appreciated and applauded, but I know that my Mabel Vane was received with a warmth out of all proportion to the merits of my performance, and that this angered some of Mrs Bancroft's admirers, and made them the bearers of ill-natured stories. Any unpleasantness that it caused between us personally was of the briefest duration. It would have been odd indeed if I had been jealous of her, or she of me. Apart from all else, I had met with my little bit of success in such a different field, and she was almost another Madame Vestris in popular esteem.

When I was playing Blanche Hayes in "Ours," I nearly killed Mrs Bancroft with the bayonet which it was part of the business of the play for me to "fool" with. I charged as usual; either she made a mistake and moved to the right instead of to the left, or I made a mistake. Anyhow, I wounded her in the arm. She had to wear it in a sling, and I felt very

How many times Shakespeare draws fathers and daughters, and how little stock he seems to take of *mothers*! Portia and Desdemona, Cordelia, Rosalind and Miranda, Lady Macbeth, Queen Katherine and Hermione, Ophelia, Jessica, Hero, and many more are daughters of *fathers*, but of their mothers we hear nothing. My own daughter called my attention to this fact quite recently, and it is really a singular one. Of mothers of sons there are plenty of examples. Constance, Volunna, the Countess Rousillon, Gertrude; but if there are mothers of daughters at all, they are poor examples, like Juliet's mother and Mrs. Page. I wonder if in all the many hundreds of books written on Shakespeare and his plays this point has been taken up? I once wrote a paper on the "Letters in Shakespeare's Plays," and congratulated myself that they had never been made a separate study. The very day after I first read my paper in Glasgow, a lady wrote to me from Oxford and said I was mistaken in thinking that there was no other contribution to the subject. She enclosed an essay of her own which had either been published, or read before some society. Probably some one else has dealt with Shakespeare's patronage of fathers and neglect of mothers! I often wonder what the mothers of Goneril, Regan and Cordelia were like! I think Lear must have married twice.

"Romeo and Juliet" was the first of Henry Irving's great Shakespearean productions. "Hamlet" and "Othello" had been mounted with care, but, in spite of statements that I have seen to the contrary, they were not true reflections of Irving as a producer. In beauty I do not think that "Romeo and Juliet" surpassed "The Cup," but it was very sumptuous, impressive and Italian. It was the most *elaborate* of all the Lyceum productions. In it Henry first displayed his mastery of crowds. The braiding of the rival houses in the streets, the procession of girls to wake Juliet on her wedding morning, the musicians, the magnificent reconciliation of the two houses which closed the play, every one on the stage holding a torch, were all treated with a marvellous sense of pictorial effect. Henry once said to me: "'Hamlet' could be played anywhere on its acting merits. It marches from situation to situation. But 'Romeo and Juliet' proceeds from picture to picture. Every line suggests a picture. It is a dramatic poem rather than a drama, and I mean to treat it from that point of view."

While he was preparing the production, he revived "The Two Roses," a comedy in which as Digby Grant he had made a great success years before. I rehearsed the part of Lottie two or three times, but Henry

badly about it, all the more because of the ill-natured stories of its being no accident.

Miss Marie Tempest is perhaps the actress of the present day who reminds me a little of what Mrs Bancroft was at the Prince of Wales's but neither nature nor art succeed in producing two actresses exactly alike. At her best Mrs Bancroft was unapproachable. I think that the best thing I ever saw her do was the farewell to the boy in "Sweethearts." It was exquisite!

In "Masks and Faces" Taylor and Reade had collaborated, and the exact share of each in the result was left to one's own discernment. I remember saying to Taylor one night at dinner when Reade was sitting opposite me, that I wished he (Taylor) would write me a part like that. "If only I could have an original part like Peg!"

Charles Reade, after fixing me with his amused and *very* glittering eye, said across the table: "I have something for your private ear, Madam, after this repast!" And he came up *with* the ladies, sat by me, and, calling me "an artful toad"—a favourite expression of his for me!—told me that *he*, Charles Reade and no other, had written every line of Peg, and that I ought to have known it. I *didn't* know, as a matter of fact, but perhaps it was stupid of me. There was more of Tom Taylor in Mabel Vane.

I played five parts in all at the Prince of Wales's, and I think I may claim that the Bancrofts found me a *useful* actress—ever the height of my ambition! They wanted Byron—the author of "Our Boys"—to write me a part in the new play, which they had ordered from him, but when "Winkles" turned up there was no part which they felt they could offer me, and I think Coghlan was also not included in the cast. At any rate, he was free to take me to see Henry Irving act. Coghlan was always raving about Irving at this time. He said that one evening spent in watching him act was the best education an actor could have. Seeing other people act, even if they are not Irvings, is always an education to us. I have never been to a theatre yet without learning something. It must have been in the spring of 1876 that I received this note:

Will you come in our box on Tuesday for Queen Mary? Ever yours,
CHARLES T. COGHLAN.

I accepted the invitation. I saw Irving's King Philip. Well, I can only say that he never did anything better to the day of his death. Never shall I forget his expression and manner when Miss Bateman, as Queen Mary (she was *very* good, by the way), was pouring out her heart to him. The horrid, dead look, the cruel unresponsiveness,

Her smile was the most fascinating, irresistible thing imaginable. Bright and her art had not abated—not one little bit! Nor had her charm. Her voice had become a little jagged and harsh, but her eye was still a beautiful expressive eye! When she played the Nurse at the Lyceum learned, *filled* it. She had such breadth of style, such a lovely voice, such She swept on to the stage and in that magical way, never, never to be field" by Tom Taylor), Peg Woffington, and other parts of the kind. Those days she was playing Olivia (in a version of the "Vicar of Wakefield" by Tom Taylor), Peg Woffington, and other parts of the kind. In Years before, I had seen Mrs Stirling act at the Adelphi with Benjamin Webster, and had cried out: "*That's* my idea of an actress!" In scream when she found me dead was horribly real and effective.

she did not play for comedy at all, but was very emotional. Her parrot In the "Cords" scene, where the Nurse tells Juliet of the death of Paris, part like a female pantaloons. She did not assume any great decapitulation. She was the only Nurse that I have ever seen who did not play the was how it *was* played eventually.

coaxing Mrs Stirling to let the scene be played on these lines, but this mother?" I spoke with indignation, tears and rage. We were a long time answering I lost my temper, with genuine passion. At "Where's your I felt that Juliet was angry with the Nurse. Each time she delayed in in order to get that cheap reward, "a safe laugh." I felt that it was wrong. must give imitations of the Nurse on the line "Where's your mother?" Nurse to get the news of Romeo out of her. Tradition said that Juliet Tradition said that Juliet must go on coqueting and clicking over the

And yet she is not here...

The clock struck twelve when I did send the nurse,

scene beginning—

I had one battle with Mrs Stirling over "tradition." It was in the the chief honours.

old Tom Mead as the Apothecary—the two "old 'uns" romped away with She played it splendidly none the less. Indeed, she as the Nurse and rehearsals at all. How am I going to play the Nurse?"

"Oh, these modern ways!" she used to say. "We never have any that she had not rehearsed enough.

whom Henry had engaged to play the nurse, was always groaning out Juliet" I remember that Mrs Stirling, a charming and ripe old actress They were the real thing." While we were rehearsing "Romeo and of insufficient rehearsals, and says, perhaps, "Think of Irving's rehearsals! There is generally some "old 'un" in a company now who complains the end of my life, and I don't want to waste it in sleep!"

"Sleepy! Good heavens, no! I never sleep more than two hours. It's

the indifference of the creature! While the poor woman protested and wept, he went on polishing his ring! Then the tone in which he asked: "Is dinner ready?"

It was the perfection of quiet malignity and cruelty. I was just spell-bound by a study in cruelty, which seemed to me a triumphant assertion of the power of the actor to create as well as to interpret, for Tennyson does not suggest half what Henry Irving did.

We talk of progress, improvement, and advance; but when I think of Henry Irving's Philip, I begin to wonder if Oscar Wilde was not profound as well as witty when he said that a great artist moves in a cycle of masterpieces, of which the last is no more perfect than the first. Only the memory of Irving's Petruchio stops me. But, then, he had not found himself. He was not an artist.

"Why did Whistler paint him as Philip?" some one once asked me. How dangerous to "ask why" about any one so freakish as Jimmy Whistler. But I answered then, and would answer now, that it was because, as Philip, Henry, in his dress without much colour (from the common point of view), his long, gray legs, and Velasquez-like attitude, looked like the kind of thing which Whistler loved to paint. Velasquez had painted a real Philip of the same race. Whistler would paint the actor who had created the Philip of the stage.

I have a note from Whistler written to Henry at a later date which refers to the picture, and suggests portraying him in all his characters. It is common knowledge that the sitter never cared much about the portrait. Henry had a strange affection for the wrong picture of himself. He disliked the Bastien Lepage, the Whistler, and the Sargent, which never even saw the light. He adored the weak, handsome picture by Millais, which I must admit, all the same, held the mirror up to one of the characteristics of Henry's face—its extreme refinement. Whistler's Philip probably seemed to him not nearly showy enough.

I knew Whistler, by the way, long before he painted the Philip. He gave me the most lovely dinner-set of blue and white china that any woman ever possessed, and a set of Venetian glass, too good for a world where glass is broken. He sent my little girl a tiny Japanese kimono when Liberty was hardly a name. Many of his friends were my friends. He was with the dearest of those friends, Edward Godwin, when he died.

The most remarkable men I have known were Whistler and Oscar Wilde. This does not imply that I liked them better or admired them more than others, but there was something about both of them more instantaneously individual and audacious than it is possible to describe.

When I went with Coghlan to see Henry Irving's Philip I was no stranger to his acting. I had been present with Tom Taylor at the famous first night at the Lyceum in 1874, when Henry Irving put his fortune, counted not in gold, but in years of scorned delights and laborious days—years of constant study and reflection, of Spartan self-denial, and deep melancholy—I was present when he put it all to the touch "to win or lose it all." This is no exaggeration. Hamlet was by far the greatest part that he had ever played, or was ever to play. If he had failed—but why pursue it? He could not fail.

Yet the success on the first night at the Lyceum in 1874 was not of that electrical kind which has greeted the momentous achievements of some actors. The first two acts were received with indifference. The people could not see how packed they were with superb acting—perhaps because the new Hamlet was so simple, so quiet, so free from the exhibition of actors' artifices which used to bring down the house in "Louis XI" and in "Richelieu," but which were really the *easy* things in acting, and in "Richelieu" (in my opinion) not especially well done. In "Hamlet" Henry Irving did not go to the audience. He made them come to him. Slowly but surely attention gave place to admiration, admiration to enthusiasm, enthusiasm to triumphant acclaim.

I have seen many Hamlets—Fechter, Charles Kean, Rossi, Frederick Haas, Forbes-Robertson, and my own son, Gordon Craig, among them—but they were not in the same hemisphere! I refuse to go and see Hamlets now. I want to keep Henry Irving's fresh and clear in my memory until I die.

When he engaged me to play Ophelia in 1878 he asked me to go down to Birmingham to see the play, and that night I saw what I shall always consider the *perfection* of acting. This Hamlet had been wonderful in 1874. In 1878 it was far more wonderful. It has been said that when Henry Irving has "advantage" of my Ophelia, his Hamlet "improved." I don't think so. He was always independent of the people

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The Birmingham night he knew I was there. He played—I say it without vanity—for me. We players are not above that weakness, if it be a weakness. If ever anything inspires us to do our best it is the presence in the audience of some fellow-artist who must in the nature of things know more completely than any one what we intend, what we do, what we feel. The response from such a member of the audience flies across the footlights to us like a flame. I felt it once when I played Olivia

Johnston Forbes-Robertson made his first appearance at the Lyceum as Claudio. I had not acted with him since "The Wandering Heir," and his improvement as an actor in the ten years that had gone by since then was marvellous. I had once said to him that he had far better stick to his painting and become an artist instead of an actor. His Claudio made me "take it back." It was beautiful. I have seen many young actors play the part since then, but not one of them made it anywhere near as convincing. Forbes-Robertson put a touch of Leonces into it, a part which some years later he was to play magnificently, and through the subtle indication of consuming and insanely suspicious jealousy made Claudio's offensive conduct explicable at least. On the occasion of the performance at Drury Lane which the theatrical profession organised in 1906 in honour

had the art of making ceremonies seem very real. That it *was* a church, hardly a question that old Mead was a Friar. Henry out of the ordinary except for the Church Scene. There was no question The stage-management of the play was very good; the scenery nothing to know what I am driving at!

a great personal success for me. It is only in comedy that people seem to well again; but the Lyceum production was a great success, and Beatrice appearance as Beatrice at Leeds, and said that I never played the part so we had had some scenes of the same type. I have already told of my first Beatrice and Benedick in particular, because in Mrs Cowley's old comedy, to Our success with "The Belle's Stratagem" had pointed to comedy,

§ 6

"Thank you very much," he wrote to me after his first night as Paris, "for writing me a word of encouragement.... I was very much ashamed and disgusted with myself all Sunday for my poverty-stricken and thin performance.... I think I was a little better last night. Indeed I was much touched at the kindness and sympathy of all the company and their efforts to make the awkward new boy feel at home.... I feel doubly grateful to you and Mr. Irving for the light you shed from the lamp of art on life now that I begin to understand the labour and weariness the process of trimming the lamp entails."

the good work that he did afterwards. one production, but he always regarded Henry Irving as the source of name is honoured all over England. He was only at the Lyceum for this who has always been associated with high endeavour, Frank Benson's the more difficult the part the better he is—I like his *Lear*), and a man spearean repertory. A wonderful organiser, a good actor (oddly enough, three companies, all travelling through Great Britain playing a Shake-ous days." Those laborious days led him at last to the control of two or

before Eleonora Duse. I felt that she felt it once when she played Marguerite Gauthier for me.

When I read "Hamlet" now, everything that Henry did in it seems to me more absolutely right, even than I thought at the time. I would give much to be able to record it all in detail, but writing is not the medium in which this can be done. Sometimes I have thought of giving readings of "Hamlet," for I can remember every tone of Henry's voice, every emphasis, every shade of meaning that he saw in the lines and made manifest to the discerning. Yes, I think I could give some pale idea of what his Hamlet was if I read the play.

"Words! words! words!" What is it to say, for instance, that the cardinal qualities of his Prince of Denmark were strength, delicacy, distinction? There was never a touch of commonness. Whatever he did or said, blood and breeding pervaded him.

His "make-up" was very pale, and this made his face beautiful when one was close to him, but at a distance it gave him a haggard look. Some said he looked twice his age.

He kept three things going at the same time—the antic madness, the sanity, the sense of the theatre. The last was to all that he imagined and thought, what charity is said by St Paul to be to all other virtues.

He was never cross or moody—only melancholy. His melancholy was as simple as it was profound. It was touching, too, rather than defiant. You never thought that he was wantonly sad and enjoying his own misery.

He neglected no *coup de théâtre* to assist him, but who notices the servants when the host is present?

For instance, his first entrance as Hamlet was, as we say in the theatre, very much "worked up." He was always a tremendous believer in processions, and rightly. It is through such means that Royalty keeps its hold on the feeling of the public, and makes its mark as a Figure and a Symbol. Henry Irving understood this. Therefore, to music so apt that it was not remarkable in itself, but merely a contribution to the general excited anticipation, the Prince of Denmark came on to the stage. I understood later on at the Lyceum what days of patient work had gone to the making of that procession.

At its tail, when the excitement was at fever heat, came the solitary figure of Hamlet, looking extraordinarily tall and thin. The lights were turned down—another stage trick—to help the effect that the figure was spirit rather than man.

He was weary. His cloak trailed on the ground. He did *not* wear the miniature of his father obtrusively round his neck! His attitude was one which I have seen in a common little illumination to the "Reciter," com-

period of fifty-five years, wrote another nice letter about "Much Ado"

A playgoer whose knowledge of the English stage extended over a

I fancy than we want new theatres and perhaps new plays."

does so much to create new playgoers—which is what we want, far more

ceive to be possible. I think," he added, "that the work at your theatre

that it was "as perfect a representation of a Shakespearean play as I con-

when "Much Ado" was produced, wrote to Henry after the first night

Mr. Pinero, who was no longer a member of the Lyceum company

and saved a little girl's life.

Later it came out that he had jumped off a steamboat into the Thames

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Terriss carelessly.

"Is it raining, Terriss?" said some one who noticed that he was wet.

One night he came into the theatre soaked from head to foot.

famous *jeune premier*.

touch of the same insouciance and lawlessness was Leigh Murray, a

same. The only actor of my father's day, he used to tell me, who had a

I have never seen any one at all like Terriss, and my father said the

WILL TERRISS.

drooping heart of yours sincerely,

and will you do it with me on tour if possible? Say yes, and lighten the

I hope you are enjoying yourself, and in the best of health. I very much

My dear Guv,—

he never gave offence, not even when he wrote a letter of this kind:

He was the only person who ever ventured to "check" Henry, yet

The wretch had quite forgotten that he had killed her!

my mother."

"See that dear old woman sitting in the fourth row of the stalls. That's

the play began, he said to me gaily:

Terriss and I were looking through the curtain at the audience just before

Henry promptly gave him the day off. A few weeks later, when

And Terriss wept.

hear that my poor mother passed away early this morning."

"Tricks, Guv'nor! I think you'll regret having said that when you

"Now no hanky-panky tricks, Terriss."

Terriss, casting down his eyes.

"I think you'll be sorry you've spoken to me like this, Guv'nor," said

late that it was past a joke, and Henry spoke to him sharply.

he came to rehearsal full of absurd excuses. One day, however, he was so

Henry laughed. He never could be angry with Terriss, not even when

"Oh, get along, Guv'nor, you know!"

"Terriss, what's the meaning of that?"

His advice to the players was not advice. He did not speak it as an actor. Nearly all Hamlets in that scene give away the fact that they are actors, and not dilettanti of royal blood. Irving defined the way he would have the players speak as an *order*, an instruction of the merit of which he was regally sure. There was no patronising flavour in his acting here, not a touch of "I'll teach you how to do it." He was swift—swift and simple—pausing for the right word now and again, as in the phrase "to

Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

And all that he tried to make others do with these lines, he himself did with every line of his own part. Every word lived. Some said: "Oh, Irving only makes Hamlet a love poem!" They said that, I suppose, because in the Nunnery scene with Ophelia he was the lover above the prince and the poet. With what passionate longing his hands hovered over Ophelia at her words:

Bernardo: 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.
Francisco: For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold . . .

Bernardo: He.
Francisco: Bernardo?
Bernardo: Long live the King!
Francisco: Nay, answer me; stand, and unfold yourself.
Bernardo: Who's there?

"We must start this play a living thing," he used to say at rehearsals, and he worked until the skin grew tight over his face, until he became livid with fatigue, yet still beautiful, to get the opening lines said with individuality, suggestiveness, speed, and power.

The play's the thing
With which to catch the conscience of the King,
and, as the curtain came down, was seen to be writing madly on his tablets against one of the pillars.

said:
The hair looked blue-black, like the plumage of a crow; the eyes burning—two fires veiled as yet by melancholy. But the appearance of the man was not single, straight or obvious, as it is when I describe it—any more than his passions throughout the play were. I only remember one moment when his intensity concentrated itself in a straightforward unmistakable emotion, without side-current or back-water. It was when he piled by Dr Pinches (Henry Irving's old schoolmaster). Yet how right to have taken it, to have been indifferent to its humble origin! Nothing could have been better when translated into life by Irving's genius.

She must be always *merry* and by turns scornful, tormenting, vexed, self-com-muning, absent, melting, brilliant, indignant, *sad-merry*, thoughtful, withering, gentle, humorous, and gay, Gay, Gay! Protecting (to Hero), motherly, very intellectual—a gallant creature and complete in mind and feature.

After a run of two hundred and fifty nights, "Much Ado," although it was still drawing fine houses, was withdrawn as we were going to America, for the first time, in the autumn (of 1883) and Henry wanted to rehearse the plays that we were to do in the States by reviving them in London at the close of the summer season. It was during these revivals that I played Jeannette in "The Lyons Mail"—not a big part, and not well suited to me, but I played it well enough to support my theory that what-ever I have *not* been, I *have* been a useful actress.

I always associate "The Lyons Mail" with old Mead, whose performance of the father, Jerome Lesurques, was one of the most impressive things that this fine actor did with us. (Before Henry was ever heard of, Mead had played Hamlet at Drury Lane!) Indeed when Mead "broke up," Henry put aside "The Lyons Mail" for many years because he dreaded playing Lesurques' scene with his father without Mead. In the days just before the break-up, which came about because Mead was old, and—I hope there is no harm in saying of him what can be said of many men who have done finely in the world—too fond of "the wine when it is red," Henry used to suffer great anxiety in the scene, because he never knew what Mead was going to do or say next. When Jerome Lesurques is forced to suspect his son of the murder, he has a line:

Am I mad, or dreaming? Would I were.

Mead one night gave this less romantic reading:

Am I mad or *drunk*? Would I were!

The last episode in the eventful history of "Meadisms" occurred in "The Lyons Mail" when Mead came on to the stage in his own top-hat, went over to the sofa, and lay down, apparently for a nap! Not a word could Henry get from him, and Henry had to play the scene by himself. He did it in this way:

"You say, father, that I," etc. "I answer you that it is false!"

Mead had a remarkable foot. Norman Forbes called it an *architectural*

foot. Bunions and gout combined to give it a gargoyled effect! One night, I forget whether it was in this play or another, Henry, pawing the ground with his foot before an "exit"—one of the mannerisms which his imitators delighted to burlesque—came down on poor old Mead's foot, bunion, gargoyles and all! Hardly had Mead stopped cursing under his breath

hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature." His slight pause and eloquent gesture when the all-embracing word "Nature" came in answer to his call, were exactly repeated unconsciously years later by the Queen of Roumania (Carmen Sylva). She was telling us the story of a play that she had written. The words rushed out swiftly, but occasionally she would wait for the one that expressed her meaning most comprehensively and exactly, and as she got it, up went her hand in triumph over her head. 'Like yours in 'Hamlet,' " I told Henry at the time.

I knew this Hamlet both ways—as an actress from the stage, and as an actress putting away her profession for the time as one of the audience—and both ways it was superb to me. Tennyson, I know, said it was not a perfect Hamlet. I wonder, then, where he hoped to find perfection!

James Spedding, considered a fine critic in his day, said Irving was "simply hideous...a monster!" Another of these fine critics declared that he never could believe in Irving's Hamlet after having seen "*part*" (sic) of his performance as a murderer in a commonplace melodrama." Would one believe that any one could seriously write so stupidly as that about the earnest effort of an earnest actor, if it were not quoted by some of Irving's biographers?

Some criticism, however severe, however misguided, remains within the bounds of justice, but what is one to think of the *Quarterly* Reviewer who declared that "the enormous pains taken with the scenery had ensured Mr Irving's success"? The scenery was of the simplest. No money was spent on it even when the play was revived at the Lyceum after Colonel Bateman's death. Henry's dress probably cost him about £2!

My Ophelia dress was made of material which could not have cost more than 2s. a yard, and not many yards were wanted, as I was at the time thin to vanishing point! I have the dress still, and, looking at it the other day, I wondered what leading lady now would condescend to wear it.

At all its best points, Henry's Hamlet was susceptible of absurd imitation. Think of this well, young actors, who are content to play for safety, to avoid ridicule at all costs, to be "natural"—oh, word most vilely abused! What sort of *naturalness* is this of Hamlet's?

O villain, villain, smiling damned villain!

Henry Irving's imitators could make people burst with laughter when they took off his delivery of that line. And, indeed, the original, too, was almost provocative of laughter—rightly so, for such emotional indignation has its funny as well as its terrible aspect. The mad, and all are mad who have, as Socrates put it, "a divine release from the common ways

has been dead many years, and the old version of the story has been retained, in order that the reader may have in this note, a charming little piece of evidence of Ellen Terry's kind-heartedness and consideration.

7. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter VIII were: Camma ("The Cup," 1881); Letitia Hardy (The Belle's Stratum, 1881); Desdemona ("Othello," 1881); Juliet ("Romeo and Juliet," 1881); Jeannette ("The Lyons Mail," 1883); Clementine ("Robert Macaire," 1883).

As one of the audience I was much struck by Irving's treatment of interjections and exclamations in "Hamlet." He breathed the line: "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt," as one long yearning, and, done when you read the scene at home.

After having been very quiet and rapid, very discreet, he pronounced these lines in a loud, clear voice, dragged out every syllable as if there never could be an end to his horror and his rage.

I had been familiar with the scene from my childhood—I had studied it; I had heard from my father how Macready acted in it, and now I found that I had a *fool* of an idea of it! That's the advantage of study, good people, who go to see Shakespeare acted. It makes you know sometimes what is being done, and what you never dreamed would be

Though all the earth overwhelm them to men's eyes.
...foul deeds will rise,

Irving's face, as he listened to Horatio's tale, blazed with intelligence. He cross-examined the men with keenness and authority. His mental deductions as they answered were clearly shown. With "I would I had been there" the cloud of unseen witnesses with whom he had before been communing again descended. For a second or two Horatio and the rest did not exist for him.... So onward to the crowning couplet:

For God's love, let me hear.

But the dreamer becomes attentive, sharp as a needle, with the words:

My father! Methinks I see my father.

He is still out of it when he says:

nates it. Bit by bit as Horatio talks, Hamlet comes back into the world. As a bad actor befores Shakespeare's meaning, so a good actor illumines it.

Well, there was never any doubt that Henry Irving saw it, and it was through his acting in the Horatio scene that he made us sure.

From the first I saw this extravagance, this bizarre in Henry Irving's acting. I noticed, too, its infinite variety. In "Hamlet," during the first scene with Horatio, Marcellus and Bernardo, he began by being very absent and distant. He exchanged greetings sweetly and gently, but he was the visionary. His feet might be on the ground, but his head was towards the stars "where the eternal arc." Years later he said to me of another actor in "Hamlet": "*He* would never have seen the ghost." Well, there was never any doubt that Henry Irving saw it, and it was through his acting in the Horatio scene that he made us sure.

All great acting has a certain strain of extravagance which the imitators catch hold of. They give us the eccentric body without the sublime soul.

spirit of Astarie in "Manfred," was known to a later generation of players as the aristocratic dowager of stately presence and incisive repartee. Her son, Fuller Mellish, was also in the cast as Curio, and when we played "Twelfth Night" in America was promoted to the part of Sebastian. In London my brother Fred played it. Directly Fred walked on to the stage, looking as like me as possible, yet a *man* all over, he was a success. I don't think that I have ever seen any success so unmistakable and instantaneous.

In America "Twelfth Night" was liked far better than in London, but I never liked it. I thought our production dull, lumpy and heavy. Henry's Malvolio was fine and dignified, but not good for the play. I was handicapped as Viola by physical pain. On the first night I had a bad thumb—I thought it was a whitlow—and had to carry my arm in a sling. It grew worse every night, and I felt so sick and faint from pain that I played most of my scenes sitting in a chair. One night Dr Stoker, Bram Stoker's brother, came round between the scenes, and, after looking at my thumb, said:

"We'll soon put that right. I'll cut it for you."

He lanced it then and there, and I went on with my performance. George Stoker, who was just going off to Ireland, could not see the job through, but the next day I was in for the worst illness I ever had in my life. It was blood-poisoning, and the doctors were in doubt for a time as to whether they would not have to amputate my arm. They said that if George Stoker had not lanced the thumb so promptly, I *should* have lost my arm.

A disagreeable incident in connection with my illness was that a member of my profession made it the occasion of an unkind allusion (in a speech at the Social Science Congress) to "actresses who feign illness and have straw laid down before their houses, while behind the drawn blinds they are having riotous supper-parties, dancing the can-can and drinking champagne." Upon being asked for "name," the speaker would neither assert nor deny that she was referring to Ellen Terry (whose poor arm at the time was as big as her waist, and *that* has never been very small!).

I think we first heard of the affair on our second voyage to America, during which I was still so ill that they thought I might never see Quebec, and Henry wrote a letter to the press—a "scorcher." He showed it to me on the boat. When I had read it, I tore it up and threw the bits into the sea.

"It hasn't injured me in any way," I said. "Any answer would be undignified."

Henry did what I wished in the matter, but, unlike me, he never

"O horrible, O horrible! most horrible!" as a groan. When we first went to America his address at Harvard touched on this very subject, and it may be interesting to know that what he preached in 1885 he had practised as far back as 1874.

On the question of pronunciation, there is something to be said which I think in ordinary teaching is not sufficiently considered. Pronunciation should be simple and unaffected, but not always fashioned rigidly according to a dictionary standard. No less an authority than Cicero points out that pronunciation must vary widely according to the emotions to be expressed; that it may be broken or cut with a varying or direct sound, and that it serves for the actor the purpose of colour to the painter, from which to draw variations. Take the simplest illustration. The formal pronunciation of A-h is "Ah," of O-h, "Oh," but you cannot stereotype the expression of emotion like this. These exclamations are words of one syllable, but the speaker who is sounding the gamut of human feeling will not be restricted in his pronunciation by dictionary rule. It is said of Edmund Kean that he never spoke such ejaculations, but always sighed or groaned them. Fancy an actor saying:

"My Desdemona! Oh! oh! oh!"

Words are intended to express feelings and ideas, not to bind them in rigid fetters; the accents of pleasure are different from the accents of pain, and if a feeling is more accurately expressed as in nature by a variation of sound not provided by the laws of pronunciation, then such imperfect laws must be disregarded and nature vindicated!

It was of the address in which these words occur that a Boston hearer said that it was felt by every one present that "the truth had been spoken by a man who had learned it through living and not through theory."

I leave his Hamlet for the present with one further reflection. It was in *courtesy* and *humour* that it differed most widely from other Hamlets that I have seen and heard of. This Hamlet was never rude to Polonius. His attitude towards the old Bromide was that of one who should say: "You dear, funny old simpleton, whom I have had to bear with all my life—how terribly in the way you seem now." With what slightly amused and cynical playfulness this Hamlet said: "I had thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well; they imitated humanity so abominably."

Hamlet was by far his greatest triumph, although he would not admit it himself—preferring in some moods to declare that his finest work was done in Macbeth, which was almost universally disliked.

§ 3

ALTHOUGH I was now earning a good salary, I still lived in lodgings at Camden Town, took an omnibus to and from the theatre, and denied

simple-minded old clergyman, just as he walked on a prince in "Hamlet," a king in "Charles I," and a saint in "Becket."

"Olivia" has always been a family play. Eddy and Ted walked on the stage for the first time in the Court production. In later years Ted played Moses, and Eddy made her first appearance in a speaking part as Polly Flamborough. She has since played both Sophia and the Gipsy. My brother Charlie's little girl Beatrice made her first appearance as Bill; my sister Floss played Olivia on a provincial tour and my sister Marion played it at the Lyceum when I was ill.

I saw Floss play it, and took from her a lovely and sincere bit of "business." In the third act, where the Vicar has found his erring daughter and has come to take her away from the inn, I had always hesitated at my entrance as if I were not quite sure what reception my father would give me after what had happened. Floss in the same situation came running in and went straight to her father, quite sure of his love if not of his forgiveness.

I did not take some business which Marion did on Terriss's suggestion. When Thornhill tells Olivia that she is not his wife, I used to thrust him away with both hands as I said—"Devil!"

"It's very good, Nell, very fine," said Terriss to me, "but believe me, you miss a great effect there. You play it grandly, of course, but at that moment you miss it. As you say 'Devil' you ought to strike me full in the face."

"Oh, don't be silly, Terriss," I said, "she's not a pugilist."

Of course I saw, apart from what was dramatically fit, what would happen.

However Marion, very young, very earnest, very dutiful, anxious to please Terriss, listened eagerly to the suggestion during an understudy rehearsal.

"No one could play this part better than your sister Nell," said Terriss to the attentive Marion, "but as I always tell her, she does miss one great effect. When Olivia says 'Devil' she ought to hit me bang in the face."

"Thank you for telling me," said Marion gratefully.

"It will be much more effective," said Terriss.

It was. When the night came for Marion to play the part she struck out, and Terriss had to play the rest of the scene with a handkerchief held to his bleeding nose!

I think it was as Olivia that Eleonora Duse first saw me act. She had thought of playing the part herself some time, but she said: "*Never now!*" No letter about my acting ever gave me the same pleasure as this from her:

All went well until the last line. Then he came to a stop.
Nothing would make him say sheep!
 With a face beaming with anxiety to please, looking adorable, he
 would offer any word but the right one.

When the voices of children are heard on the green,
 And laughing is heard on the hill,
 My heart is at rest within my breast,
 And everything else is still.
 Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
 And the dew of the night arise,
 Come, come, leave off play, and let us away,
 Till morning appears in the skies.
 No, no, let us play, for yet it is day,
 And we cannot go to sleep.
 Besides, in the sky the birds fly,
 And the hills are all covered with sheep . . .

"*That's not right!*"
 Teddy was of a more flattering disposition, but very obstinate when
 he chose. I remember "wrasling" with him for hours over a little Blake
 poem which he had learned by heart, to say to his mother:

"You *did* look long and thin in your grey dress."
 "When you fainted I thought you was going to fall into the orchestra
 —you was so long."
 In "New Men and Old Acres" I had to play the piano while I conducted a conversation consisting on my side chiefly of haughty remarks to the effect that "blood would tell," to talk naturally and play at the same time. I "shied" at the lines, became self-conscious, and either sang the words or altered the rhythm of the tune to suit the pace of the speech. I grew anxious about it, and was always practising it at home. After much hard work Edy used to wither me with:

My little daughter was a very severe critic! I think if I had listened to her, I should have left the stage in despair. She saw me act for the first time as Mabel Vane, but no compliments were to be extracted from her.
 My little daughter was a very severe critic! I think if I had listened to her, I should have left the stage in despair. She saw me act for the first time as Mabel Vane, but no compliments were to be extracted from her.
 had grown up these old men would still ask affectionately after "little todians—old Crimean veterans, most of them—and when the children performances of "As You Like It" for the benefit of the Palace Court Theatre. It was then, too, that I had my first cottage—a wee place at Hampton Court where my children were very happy. They used to give themselves all luxuries. I did not take a house until I went to the Court

I played it beautifully sometimes. The language was often very commonplace—not nearly as poetic or dramatic as that of "Charles I"—but the character was all right—simple, touching, real.

The Garden Scene I know was unsatisfactory. It was a bad, weak love-scene, but George Alexander as Faust played it admirably. Indeed he always acted like an angel with me; he was so malleable, ready to do anything. He was launched into the part at very short notice, after H. B. Conway's failure on the first night. Poor Conway! It was Coghlan as

Shylock all over again.

Henry called a rehearsal the next day, a Sunday, I think. The company stood about in groups on the stage while Henry walked up and down, speechless, but humming a tune occasionally, always a portentous sign with him. The scene set was the Broken Scene, and Conway stood at the top of the slope as far away from Henry as he could get! He looked abject. His handsome face was very red, his eyes full of tears. He was terrified at the thought of what was going to happen. The actor was summoned to the office, and presently Loveday came out and said that Mr George Alexander would play Faust the following night. Alec had been wonderful as Valentine the night before, and as Faust he more than justified Henry's belief in him. After that he never looked back. He had come to the Lyceum for the first time in 1882, an unknown actor from a stock company in Glasgow, to play Caleb Decie in "The Two Roses." He then left us for a time, returned for "Faust," and remained in the Lyceum company for some years playing all Terriss's parts.

Alexander had the romantic quality which was lacking in Terriss, but there was a kind of shy modesty about him which handicapped him when he played Squire Thornhill in "Olivina." "Be more dashing, Alec!" I used to say to him. "Well, I do my best," he said. "At the hotels I chuck all the barmaids under the chin, and pretend I'm a dog of a fellow for the sake of this part!" Conscientious, dear, delightful Alec! No one ever deserved success more than he did or used it better when it came, as the history of the St James's Theatre under his management proves. He had the good luck to marry a wife who was clever as well as charming, and could help him.

The original cast of "Faust" was never improved upon. What Martha was ever so good as Mrs Stirling? The dear old lady's sight had failed since "Romeo and Juliet," but she was very clever at concealing it. When she let Mephistopheles in at the door, she used to drop her work on the floor so that she could find her way back to her chair. I never knew why she dropped it—she used to do it so naturally with a start when Mephistopheles knocked at the door—until one night when it was in

"And the hills are all covered with—"

"With what, Teddy?"

"Master Teddy dont know."

"Something white, Teddy."

"Snow?"

"No, no. Does snow rhyme with 'sleep'?"

"Paper?"

"No, no. Now, I am not going to the theatre until you say the right word. What are the hills covered with?"

"People."

"Teddy, you're a very naughty boy."

At this point he was put in the corner. His first suggestion when he came out was:

"Grass? Trees?"

"Are grass or trees white?" said the despairing mother with her eye on the clock, which warned her that, after all, she would have to go to the theatre without winning.

Meanwhile, Edy was murmuring: "*Sheep*, Teddy," in a loud aside, but Teddy would *not* say it, not even when both he and I burst into tears!

At Hampton Court the two children, dressed in blue and white check pinafores, their hair closely cropped—the little boy fat and fair (at this time he bore a remarkable resemblance to Lawrence's portrait of the youthful King of Rome), the little girl thin and dark—ran as wild as though the desert had been their playground instead of the gardens of this old palace of kings! They were always ready to show visitors (not so numerous then as now) the sights; prattled freely to them of "mummie," who was acting in London, and showed them the new trees which they had assisted the gardeners to plant in the wild garden, and christened after my parts. A silver birch was *Iolanthe*, a maple *Portia*, an oak *Mabel Vane*. Through their kind offices many a stranger found it easy to follow the intricacies of the famous Maze. It was a fine life for them, surely, this unrestricted running to and fro in the gardens, with the great Palace as a civilising influence!

It was for their sake that I was most glad of my increasing prosperity in my profession. My engagement with the Bancrofts was exchanged at the close of the summer season of 1876 for an even more profitable one with Mr John Hare at the Court Theatre.

I had learned a great deal at the Prince of Wales's, notably that the art of playing in modern plays in a tiny theatre was quite different from the art of playing in the classics in a big theatre. The methods for big and little theatres are alike, yet quite unlike. I had learned breadth in

to produce a play of yours. Would you like it to have a long run or a short one?" (Roars of laughter.)

Answer: "Well—er—well, of course, Mr Irving, you—well, a short run, of course for art, but—"

"Now, sir, you're on oath," said I. "Suppose that the fees were rolling in £10 and more a night—would you rather the play were a failure or a success?"

"Well, well, as you put it—I must say—er—I would rather my play had a long run!"

A—floored!

He has all his life been writing articles running down good work and crying up the impossible, and I was glad to show him up a bit!

The Vice-Chancellor made a most lovely speech after the address—an eloquent and splendid tribute to the stage.

Bourchier presented the address of the "Undergrads." I never saw a young man in a greater funk—because, I suppose, he had imitated me so often!

From the address:

"We have watched with keen and enthusiastic interest the fine intellectual quality of all these representations from Hamlet to Mcphistophiles with which you have enriched the contemporary stage. To your influence we owe deeper knowledge and more reverent study of the master mind of Shakespeare."

All very nice indeed!

I never cared much for Henry's Mcphistophiles—a twopence coloured part, anyway. Of course he had his moments—he had them in every part—but they were few. One of them was in the Prologue, when he wrote in the student's book, "Ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil." He never looked at the book, and the nature of the *spirit* appeared suddenly in a most uncanny fashion. Another was in the Spinning-wheel Scene when Faust defies Mcphistophiles, and he silences him with, "*I am a spirit*." Henry looked to grow a gigantic height—to hover over the ground instead of walking on it. It was terrifying.

I made valiant efforts to learn to spin before I played Margaret. My instructor was Mr Albert Fleming, who, at the suggestion of Ruskin, had recently revived hand-spinning and hand-weaving in the North of England. I had always hated that obviously "property" spinning-wheel in the opera, and Margaret's unmarkeable thread. My thread always broke, and at last I had to "fake" my spinning to a certain extent; but at least I worked my wheel right, and gave an impression that I could spin my pound of thread a day with the best.

Two operatic stars did me the honour to copy my Margaret dress—Madame Albani and Madame Melba. It was rather odd, by the way, that many mothers who took their daughters to see the opera of "Faust"

I was generally weeping, too, for Olivia, more than any part, touched me to the heart. I cried too much in it, just as I cried too much later on

of weeping at the wing while I rehearsed "Olivia."

things which were most illuminating, and he paid me the compliment in the stalls and criticise. But he would come quickly to me and tell me interfered very little with the stage-management, and did not care to sit

In the theatre he was charming—from an actor's point of view. He

plays, and yet never had a farthing to bless himself with!

A true Bohemian in money matters, he made a great deal out of his

his ideas were magnificent and instinct with refinement.

sloven. He could eat a large raw onion every night like any peasant, yet

He was Irish all over—the strangest mixture of the aristocrat and the

ended in smoke. With all his charm Wills was not cut out for a husband.

was at one time engaged to one of the girls, but it was a good thing it

I had known Wills before this through the Forbes-Robertsons. He

of Wakefield."

unity of my career—the part of Olivia in Wills's play from "The Vicar

to be grateful to him, it only because he gave me the second great oppor-

Personally, I always got on well with my new manager, and I ought

casily.

sorry afterwards. Mr Hare was peppery and irascible, and lost his temper

or actress who was foolish or unlucky enough to be a minute late, was

were rehearsing. He gave them fifteen minutes for lunch, and any actor

The members of his company were his, body and soul, while they

his line and stuck to it?

"King John," but what better evidence of his talent than that he knew

Very likely he would have failed if he had been called upon to produce

of a perfect *ensemble*. He was the *Melissandre* among the theatre artists.

wanted, and he got it. No one has ever surpassed him in the securing

her, extremely irritable if anything went wrong, but he knew what he

the whole of my long experience in the theatre. He was snappy in man-

Mr Hare was one of the best stage managers that I have met during

way. Too often weakness is mistaken for delicacy.

one must possess great strength before one can be delicate in the right

the same—as seen through the wrong end of the microscope. In acting

more subtle, more intimate style. But the breadth had to be there just

we had to reach. At the Prince of Wales's I had to adopt a more delicate,

plays for Charles Kade. The pit and gallery were the audience which

Shakespeare at the Princess's, and had had to employ it again in romantic

Mr Toole produced a burlesque on the Lyeccum "Faust," called "Faust-and-Loose." Henry did not care for burlesques as a rule and in this one especially disliked Fred Leslie's exact imitation of him. Faces, spectacles, voice—everything was like Henry except the ballet-skirt Leslie wore. Marie Linden gave a really clever imitation of me as Margaret. She and her sister Laura both had the trick of taking me off. I recognised the truth of Laura's caricature in the burlesque of "The Vicar of Wakefield" when as Olivia she made her entrance, leaping impulsively over a stilel

There was an absurd chorus of girl "mashers" in "Faust-and-Loose," dressed in tight black satin coats, who besides dancing and singing had tunes in unison, such as "No, no!" "We will!" "As one of these girls Violet Vanbrugh made her first appearance on the stage. In her case we will!" proved prophetic. It was her plucky "I will get on" which finally landed her in her present eminent position.

Violet Barnes was the daughter of Frebendary Barnes of Exeter, who, when he found his daughter stage-struck, behaved far more wisely than most parents. He gave her £100 and sent her to London with her old nurse to look after her, saying that if she really "meant business" she would find an engagement before the £100 was gone. Violet had inherited some talent from her mother, who was a very clever amateur actress, and the whole family were fond of getting up entertainments. But Violet didn't know quite how far £100 would go, or wouldn't go. It happened to call on her at her lodgings near Baker Street one afternoon, and found her having her head washed, and crying bitterly all the time! She had come to the end of the £100, she had not got an engagement, and thought she would have to go home defeated. There was something funny in the tragic situation. Vi was sitting on the floor, drying her hair, crying, and drinking port wine to cure a cold in her head! I told her not to be a goose, but to cheer up and come and stay with me until something turned up. We packed the old nurse back to Devonshire. Violet came and stayed with me, and in due course something did turn up. Mr Toole came to dinner, and Violet, acting on my instructions to ask every one she saw for an engagement, asked Mr Toole! He said, "That's all right, my dear. Of course. Come down and see me tomorrow." Dear old Toole! The kindest of men! Violet was with him for some time, and played at his theatre in Mr Barrie's first piece "Walker Lonsdale." Seymour Hicks, and Mary Ansell (afterwards Mrs Barrie) were also in the cast.

This was all I did to "help" Violet Vanbrugh, now Mrs Arthur Courchier and one of our best actresses, in her stage career. She helped herself, as most people do who get on. I am afraid that I have discour-

in the Nunnery scene in "Hamlet," and in the last act of "Charles I." My real tears on the stage have astonished some people, and have been the envy of others, but they have often been a hindrance to me. I have had to *work* to restrain them.

Oddly enough, although "Olivia" was such a great success at the Court, it has never made much money since. The play could pack a tiny theatre; it could never appeal in a big way to the masses. In itself, it has a sure message—the love story of an injured woman is one of the cards in the stage pack which it is always safe to play—but against this there is a bad last act, one of the worst I have ever acted in. It was always being tinkered with, but patching and alteration only seemed to make things worse.

Mr Hare produced "Olivia" perfectly. Marcus Stone designed the clothes, and I found my dresses—both faithful and charming as reproductions of the eighteenth century spirit—stood the advance of time and the progress of ideas when I played the part later at the Lyceum. I had not to alter anything. Henry Irving discovered the same thing about the scenery and stage-management. They could not be improved upon. There was very little scenery at the Court, but a great deal of taste and care in selection.

Every one was "Olivia" mad. The Olivia cap shared public favour with the Langtry bonnet. That most lovely and exquisite creature, Mrs Langtry, could not go out anywhere, at the dawn of the 'eighties, without being the nucleus of a crowd. It was no rare thing to see the crowd, to ask its cause, to receive the answer, "Mrs Langtry!" and to look in vain for the nucleus.

This was all the more remarkable, and honourable to public taste, too, because Mrs Langtry's was not a showy beauty. Her hair was the colour that it had pleased God to make it; her complexion was her own; in evening-dress she did not display nearly as much of her neck and arms as was the vogue, yet they outshone all other necks and arms through their own perfection.

I am aware that the professional critics and the public did not transfer to Mrs Langtry, the actress, the homage that they had paid to Mrs Langtry, the beauty, but I can only speak of the simplicity with which she approached her work, of her industry, and utter lack of vanity about her powers. When she played Rosalind (which my daughter, the best critic of acting I know, tells me was in many respects admirable), she wrote to me:

DEAR NELLY,—I bundled through my part somehow last night, a disgraceful performance, and *no* waist-padding! Oh, what an impudent wretch you must think me to attempt such a part! I pinched my arm once or twice

1. *Ellen Terry and Stage Aspirants.* "To him that newly cometh to change his life, let not an easy entrance be granted, but as the Apostle saith: 'Try the spirits if they be of God.'" This method, prescribed by St Benedict in his Rule, of testing the genuineness of a monastic vocation, was the method adopted by Ellen Terry of testing the genuineness of a stage vocation. For example, when a young schoolgirl, resolved to become an actress, was brought to see Ellen Terry by her grandmother for advice, she was told to go away and study three important Shakespeare parts for at least a year. "Come back to me then, and we can begin to talk about your going on the stage." The girl had the grit not to be discouraged. She returned to Ellen Terry at the end of the year, not only word-perfect in the parts, but able to show that she had studied them with industry and intelligence. Then Ellen

NOTES TO CHAPTER IX

While Henry was occupying himself with "Werner," I was pleasing myself with "The Amber Heart," a play by Alfred Calmour, a young man who was at this time Willis's secretary. I wanted to do it, not only to help Calmour, but because I believed in the play and liked the part of Ellaline. I had thought of giving a matinee of it at some other theatre, but Henry, who at first didn't like my doing it at all, said: "You must do it at the Lyceum. I can't let you, or it, go out of the theatre." So we had the matinee at the Lyceum. Mr Willard and Mr Beerbohm Tree were in the cast, and it was a great success. For the first time Henry saw me act—a whole part from the "front" at least, for he had seen and liked scraps of my Juliet from the "side." Although he had known me such a long time, my Ellaline seemed to come quite as a surprise. "I wish I could tell you of the dream of beauty that you realised," he wrote after the performance. He bought the play for me, and I continued to do it "on and off" here and in America until 1902. Many people said that I was good but the play was rubbish. This was hard on Alfred Calmour. He had created the opportunity for me, and few plays with the beauty of "The Amber Heart" have come my way since. "He thinks it's all his doing!" said Henry. "If he only knew!" "Well, that's the way of authors," I answered. "They imagine so much more about their work than we put into it, that although we may seem to the outsider to be creating, to the author we are, at our best, only doing our duty by him."

Our next production was "Macbeth." Meanwhile we had visited America three times. I must now give some account of my tours in America, of my friends there, and of some of the impressions that the vast, wonderful country made on me.

His bluff was colossal. Once when he was a little boy and wanted
 fident and dashing appearance.

On a first night he was shaking all over with fright, in spite of his con-
 audacious as he seemed, no man was ever more nervous on the stage.
 roamer, the veritable gipsy, always looked out of his insolent eyes. Yet,
 tremely queer predicaments." The adventurous, dare-devil spirit of the
 "hobnobbed with every kind of queer folk, and found myself in ex-
 engineer, sheep-farmer, and horse-breeder. He had, to use his own words,
 acted with him at the Court. He had been midshipman, tea-planter,
 Terriss had had every sort of adventure by land and sea before I

The most untidy chap I ever saw!"
 "The man's a blackguard! Why, he throws his things all over the room!"
 and of a young man who had proposed for his daughter's hand he said:
 sailor. He folded up his clothes and kept them in beautiful condition;
 the weaknesses of a child. In the theatre he had the tidy habits of a
 midshipman, whose weaknesses provoked no more condemnation than
 outside public. To the end he was "Sailor Bill"—a sort of grovelling
 He always commanded the love of his intimates as well as that of the
 he was in rough clothes, he looked a prince.

When he was "dressed up" Terriss was spoiled by fine feathers; when
 driving the chariot of the sun—precisely much the same thing, I imagined
 boy flashing past, whistling, on the high seat of his cart, or of Phæthon
 could ever be angry with him. Sometimes he reminded me of a butcher-
 hind. He had unbounded impudence, yet so much charm that no one
 talking about. Yet he "got there," while many cleverer men stayed be-
 like the "inspired idiot," Mrs Pritchard, he did not know what he was
 by divine right, can, up to a certain point, do no wrong. Very often,
 than Terriss. He was one of those heaven-born actors who, like Kings
 As I look back, I remember no figure in the theatre more remarkable

without thinking how absolutely *to the life* Terriss had got it.

Olivia says to Squire Thornhill in the first act, and never did I say it
 whipping your boot, you look the very picture of vain indifference,"
 saw the production, that Terriss was the best. "As you stand there,
 cast. Where all were good, it will be admitted, I think, by every one who
 To go back to "Olivia." Like all Hare's productions, it was perfectly
 ner, too well-bred to be hoydenish, must have been of great value.

Rosalind's lines beautifully, and that her clear, grey eyes and frank man-
 lovely speech, and Lillie Langtry had it. I can imagine that she spoke
 Just at this time there was a great dearth on the stage of people with

LILLIE.

last night to see if it was really me. It was so sweet of you to write me such
 a nice letter, and then a telegram, too! Yours ever, dear Nell,

work at the Lyceum was, she did not neglect her duty to them. She was all the same by no means a foolish fond mother. Her letters to her daughter (at the schoolgirl age), full of candid, yet helpful criticism, are sufficient proof that she was guiltless of "spoiling" her children, although in after years her son, conscious of having been consistently "spoiled" all his life by adoring women included his mother among them. After giving consideration to his conviction that "the blessed lady, my mother, no more knew how to bring up a boy than she knew how to swim," I find myself wondering whether the problem of bringing up this particular boy, whose character was indeterminate in his abnormally prolonged chrysalis days, would have been tackled more successfully by a father. The speculation reminds me that as a general rule men of genius in their childhood and adolescence have owed more to their mothers than to their fathers.

Ellen Terry, perhaps mindful of the holes left in her culture by her lack of ordinary education, sent the "little tots" of Longridge Road to school early. The school she chose was in Foxton Road, Earl's Court; it was kept by a Mrs Cole, a lady with ideas which in the 'eighties were considered advanced. She was a supporter of the new women's movement, and thought that girls ought to have as good an education as boys. She also seems to have been a pioneer of co-education. She took pupils of both sexes. Among the schoolmates of Ellen Terry's tots at Foxton Road, were Walter Raleigh, three of the Sickerts, and the children of Sir Edwin Arnold. Edith Craig tells me that her brother and she, when they first entered the school, were the most backward of the pupils in all but drawing, music and Shakespeare. In 1883 when Ellen Terry went on her first American tour, Edy became a boarder at the school, which had grown in size and reputation and been moved into larger premises; her brother was sent to a school for boys only in Kent. Later the girl's education was continued in Gloucestershire at the home of Mrs Cole's sister, Mrs Malleeson, and the boy's at Bradfield. The boy's was interrupted, or enriched, according to the point of view, by a tour in America. In Chicago in 1885 he played the small part of a gardener's boy in "Eugene Aram." "Why the dickens I was not kept to the stage from that time onwards if it was an actor they wanted, it is difficult to discover" he writes in 1932, and speculates it was because his mother was badly advised by friends who did not know that actors need not be sent to schools or colleges. Be that as it may—it is conceivable that Ellen Terry took advice, but not that she acted on it against her own convictions—Edward Wardell, as he was known in those chrysalis days was sent to school and college. From college (Heidelberg) he was also sent away, a punishment for an escapade, which owing to its innocent character, his mother thought far too severe. In 1889, at the age of seventeen, the boy who had been a failure at school and college, became a success on the stage. His first appearance in "The Dead Heart" is chronicled with pride by Ellen Terry in Chapter XII. His success suggests that even if an actor "need not be sent to school," it does him no harm.

Edith Craig, after her school-days in London and Gloucestershire, was

He played the part again at the Lyceum. How charming he was! And how very, very young! He at once gave promise of being a good actor, and of having done the right thing in following his brother on to the stage. At the present day I consider him the only actor on the stage who can play Shakespeare's fools as they should be played.

§ 5

I HAVE not the faintest recollection of "Brothers," the play by Coghlan, in which I see by the evidence of an old play-bill that I made my first appearance under Mr Hare's management.

Charles Coghlan seems to have been consistently unlucky. Yet he was a good actor and a brilliant man. I always enjoyed his companionship; found him a pleasant, natural fellow, absorbed in his work, and not at all the "dangerous" man that some people represented him.

Within less than a month from the date of the production of "Brothers," "New Men and Old Acres" was put into the Court bill. It was not a new play, but the public at once began to crowd to see it, and I have heard that it brought Mr Hare £30,000. My part, Lillian Vavasour, had been played in the original production by Mrs Kendal, but it had been written for me by Tom Taylor when I was at the Haymarket, and it suited me very well. The revival was well acted all round. Charles Kelly was splendid as Mr Brown, and H. B. Conway, a young actor whose good looks were talked of everywhere, was also in the cast. He was a descendant of Lord Byron's, and had a look of the *handsomest* portraits of the poet. With his bright hair curling tightly all over his well-shaped head, his beautiful figure, and charming presence, Conway created a sensation in the 'eighties almost equal to that made by the more famous beauty, Lillie Langtry.

As an actor he belonged to the Terriss type, but he was not nearly as good as Terriss. Of his extraordinary failure in "Faust" I shall say something when I come to the Lyceum productions. After "New Men and Old Acres," Mr Hare tried a posthumous play by Lord Lytton—"The House of Darnley." It was *not* a good play, and I was *not* good in it, although the pleasant adulation of some of my friends has made me out so. The play met with some success. It was during its run that Mr Hare commissioned Willis to write "Olivia."

§ 6

I HAD met Charles Kelly before this engagement at the Court Theatre. He had acted with me after my return to the stage in 1874, both in

pared me to find her interesting and singular (I have never been susceptible to mere prettiness) I was less struck than I should have been if she had been quite new to me."

2. *Carmen Sylva*. In a copy of Carmen Sylva's "Thoughts of a Queen" belonging to Ellen Terry there is a note in her handwriting giving a more detailed impression of the royal author: "Beautiful creature, Elizabeth Queen of Roumania. She read a play to H. I. and E. T., and was exquisitely impressive and expressive. She translated as she read, standing up, and her movements were grandly simple. Her face glowed with intelligence. The voice a little hard, but not sharp. Her very beautiful eyes glittered. The mouth well cut—a little too firm. The hands beautiful, and she used them delicately, and slowly. She had arranged her effects to perfection, and most folk would not have perceived the arrangement. A gracious, simple woman, every inch a Queen. She was tall and finely proportioned."

3. "I had studied it." This reference of Ellen Terry's to study invites a comment on a distinction, not realized now-a-days, between memorizing and studying. It can be seen from this passage that Ellen Terry had studied the part of Hamlet. This does not imply she had learned it by heart. She had been trained in a school in which the study of great parts, not with the object of playing them but with that of developing dramatic perception, was considered essential in the player's education.

4. *John Hare as "stage-manager"*: Ellen Terry is writing of days when the terminology of the theatre was somewhat different. The stage-manager of yesterday is the "producer" of today. The stage-manager of today is the "prompter" of yesterday. The office of assistant-stage-manager did not exist in 1876. His duties were performed by the call-boy.

5. *Lillian Vavasour*. It was as Lillian Vavasour in "New Men and Old Acres" that Ellen Terry "completely conquered" Bernard Shaw, convincing him that here was the woman for the new drama which was still "in the womb of time waiting for Ibsen to impregnate it."

6. *Ellen Terry's Second Marriage*. The belated divorce proceedings taken by G. F. Watts had left Ellen Terry free to marry again. Watts has been severely censured for not taking these proceedings earlier at the time of Ellen Terry's elopement with Godwin. Perhaps it was for this he feared a "male-diction" as well as for treating his young wife harshly. But I have no data for an explanation of the delay. It may be known to some of Ellen Terry's friends whether Watts would have applied for a divorce earlier had she wished it, and he been convinced it would be to her benefit, but I am in the dark about it, and am willing to make the charitable assumption that the question of divorce did not arise until after Ellen Terry's separation from Godwin. No doubt one of her motives then for deciding to marry was a desire, in her children's interests, to regularize her position. Yet it is conceivable that she was strongly attracted by Charles Wardell. All through her life the man of brains competed for her affections with the man of brawn. But this man of brawn, although a good fellow in some ways—he had a genuine affection for his wife's children, who for a time bore his name—had a violent and

of the Atlantic and of a strange, barbarous land. Our farewell performances in London had cheered me up a little—though I wept copiously at every one—by showing us that we should be missed. Henry Irving's position seemed to be confirmed and ratified by all that took place before his departure. The dinners he had to eat, the speeches that he had to make and to listen to, were really terrific!

One speech at the Rabalais Club had, it was said, the longest peroration on record. It was this kind of thing: Where is our friend Irving going? He is not going like Nares to face the perils of the far North. He is not going like A—to face something else. He is not going to China, etc.,—and so on. After about the hundredth "he is not going," Lord Houghton, who was one of the guests, grew very impatient and interrupted the orator with: "Of course he isn't! He's going to New York by the Cunard Line. I'll take him about a week!"

Many people came to see us off at Liverpool, but I only remember seeing Mrs Langtry and Oscar Wilde. It was at this time that Oscar Wilde had begun to curl his hair in the manner of the Prince Regent. "Curly hair to match the curly teeth," said some one who disliked him. Oscar Wilde *had* ugly teeth, and he was not proud of his mouth. He used to put his hand to his mouth when he talked so that it should not be noticed. His brow and eyes were very beautiful.

Well, I was not "disappointed in the Atlantic," as Oscar Wilde was the first to say, though many people have said it since.

My first voyage was a voyage of enchantment to me. The ship was laden with pig-iron, and she rolled and rolled and rolled. She could never roll too much for me! I have always been a splendid sailor, and I feel jolly at sea. The sudden leap from home into the wilderness of waves does not give me any sensation of melancholy.

What I thought I was going to see when I arrived in America I hardly remember. I had a vague idea that American women wore red flannel shirts and carried bowie knives, and that I might be sandbagged in the street! From somewhere or other I had derived an impression that New York was an ugly, noisy place.

Ugly! When I first saw that marvellous harbour I nearly cried—it was so beautiful. Whenever I come now to the unequalled approach to New York I wonder what Americans must think of the approach from the sea to London! How different are the mean, flat, marshy banks of the Thames and the wooden toy lighthouse at Dungeness to the vast, spreading Hudson with its busy multitude of steamboats, and ferryboats, its wharf upon wharf, and its tall statue of Liberty dominating all the racket and bustle of the sea traffic of the world!

That was one of the few times in America when I did not miss the

jealous temper which Ellen Terry eventually found intolerable. She implies in this chapter that her second husband had no notion of playing second fiddle as an actor. He fancied himself as a leading man. This justifies the presumption that he was mortified by her engagement at the Lyceum, which threatened his position as her leading man. It is known that he resented the friendship with Henry Irving which was the sequel to the engagement. Ellen Terry continued to tour with her husband until 1880. In 1881 there was a judicial separation. In 1885 Charles Wardell died. Ellen Terry paid his debts, and for years supported the sisters of his first wife. One happy result of her second unhappy marriage was that it healed the breach between her and her family which had caused both great pain. In a letter at this time to an old friend Ellen Terry writes of her joy at the reconciliation: "Thank God, mother is alive, and I can atone to her for the pain I unintentionally caused her."

7. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter VI were: Blanche Hayes ("Ours," 1876); Kate Hungerford ("Brothers," 1876); Lilian Vavasour ("New Men and Old Acres," 1876); Georgina Vesey ("Money," 1877); Lady Teazle ("School for Scandal," 1877); Lady Juliet ("The House of Darnley," 1877); Mrs Merryweather ("Victims," 1878); Olivia ("Olivia," 1878); Iris ("The Cynic's Defeat," 1878); Dora ("Dora," 1878).

powering my imagination. I blew my nose hard and tried to keep back my tears, but the first reporter said: "Can I send any message to your friends in England?"

I answered: "Tell them I never loved 'em so much as now," and burst into tears! No wonder that he wrote in his paper that I was a "woman of extreme nervous sensibility." Another of them said that "my figure was spare almost to attenuation." America soon remedied that. I began to put on flesh before I had been in the country a week, and it was during my fifth American tour that I became really fat for the first time in my life.

When we landed I drove to the Hotel Dam, Henry to the Brevoort House. There was no Diana on the top of the Madison Square Building then. The building did not exist, to cheer the heart of a new arrival as the first evidence of beauty in the city. There were horse trams instead of cable cars, but a quarter of a century has not altered the peculiarly dilapidated carriages in which one drives from the dock, the muddy sidewalks, and the cavernous holes in the cobble-paved streets. Had the elevated railway, the first sign of *power* that one notices after leaving the boat, begun to thunder over the streets? I cannot remember New York without it.

I missed then, as I miss now, the numberless *hansom*s of London plying in the streets for hire. People in New York get about in the tram cars, unless they have their own carriages. The hired carriage is rare and takes advantage of the lack of competition to charge two dollars (8s.) for a journey which in London would not cost fifty cents (2s.)!

I cried for two hours at the Hotel Dam! Then my companion, Miss Harries, came bustling in with: "Never mind! here's a piano!" and sat down and played "Annie Laurie" very badly until I screamed with laughter. Before the evening came my room was a bower of roses, and my dear friends in America have been throwing bouquets at me in the same wish way ever since. I had quite cheered up when Henry came to take me to see some minstrels who were performing at the Star Theatre, the very theatre where in a few days we were to open. I didn't understand any of the jokes which the American comedians made that night, but liked their dry, cool way of making them.

200

re were very few theatres in New York when we first went there. That part of the city which is now "up town" did not exist, and what then "up" is now more than "down" town. The American stage changed almost as much. In those days their most distinguished

see my Olivia for himself.

The call was in reference to my engagement as Ophelia. Very characteristic I see it now to have been of Henry to have been content to take my powers as an actress more or less on trust. A mutual friend, Lady Pollock, had told him that I was the very person for him, that "all London" was talking of my Olivia, that I had acted well in Shakespeare with the Bancrofts, that I should bring to the Lyceum Theatre what players call "a personal following." Henry chose his friends as carefully as he chose his company and his staff. He believed in Lady Pollock implicitly, and he did not—it is possible that he could not—come and

HENRY IRVING.

With every good wish, believe me, Yours sincerely,

on Tuesday next at two o'clock.

DEAR MISS TERRY,—I look forward to the pleasure of calling upon you

during the entire period of his Lyceum management.

The first letter that I ever received from Henry Irving was written on July 20th, 1878, from 15a, Grafton Street, the house in which he lived

during the first few months of his management.

lent him a certain sum of money, every farthing of which was repaid the beginning of his tenancy of the Lyceum, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts's ventures. The only shadow of foundation for this statement is that at

It was said in later years that rich ladies financed Henry Irving's

unremittently and unrelentingly to his art and his ambition.

and from her daughter, who had for such a long time been his "leading lady." He had to be a little cruel, not for the last time in a career devoted in a hurry. I daresay he found it difficult to separate from Mrs Bateman the step, but it was one of such magnitude that it could not be taken of the Lyceum Theatre. For a long time he had been contemplating

It was during the run of "Olivia" that Henry Irving became sole lessee

§ 1

(1878-1880)

WORK AT THE LYCEUM

CHAPTER VII

audience burst out into the most sympathetic spontaneous applause that I have ever heard in a theatre.

I know that there are some advanced stage reformers who think If they ever succeed they will suppress a great deal of good acting. It is said that the American actor, Edwin Forrest, once walked down to the footlights and said to the audience very gravely and sincerely: "If you don't applaud, I can't act," and I do sympathise with him. Applause is an instinctive, unconscious act expressing the sympathy between actors and audience. Just as our art demands more instinct than intellect in its exercise, so we demand of those who watch us an appreciation of the simple unconscious kind which finds an outlet in clapping rather than the cold, intellectual approval which would self-consciously think applause derogatory. I have yet to meet the actor who was *sincere* in saying that he disliked applause.

§ 3

My impression of the way American women dressed in 1883 was not favourable. Some of them wore Indian shawls and diamond earrings. They dressed too grandly in the street and too dowdily in the theatre. All this has changed. The stores in New York are now the most beautiful in the world, and the women are dressed to perfection. They are as clever at the *demi-toilette* as the Parisian, and the extreme neatness and smartness of their street clothes are very refreshing after the hoppy, blowy, trailing dresses, accompanied by the inevitable feather boa of which English girls now seem so fond. The universal white "waist" is very pretty and trim on the American girl. It is one of the distinguishing marks of a land of the free, a land where "class" hardly exists. The girl in the store wears the white waist; so does the rich girl on Fifth Avenue. It may cost anything from seventy-five cents to fifty dollars!

London when I come back from America always seems at first like an ill-lighted village, strangely tame, peaceful and backward. Above all, I miss the sunlight of America, and the clear blue skies of an evening.

"Are you glad to get back?" said an English friend.

"Very."

"It's a land of vulgarity, isn't it?"

"Oh yes, if you mean by that a wonderful land—a land of sunshine and light, of happiness, of faith in the future!" I answered. I saw no misery or poverty there. Every one looked happy. What hurts me on coming back to England is the *hopeless* look on so many faces; the de-

I brought help, too, in pictorial matters. Henry Irving had had little criticised him. I believe this helped him.

Praise to some people at certain stages of their career is more helpful than blame. I admired the very things in Henry for which other people

labeled. "What do you want with fat, podgy, prize-fighter legs!" I expostulated.

service I did him was to tell him they were beautiful.

He once told me that in the early part of his career, before I knew him, he had been jeered at, and hooted, because of his thin legs. The first

beautifully.

few French words, he took infinite pains to learn them and said them impossible to his nature. If it were necessary in one of his plays to say a as being a French scholar. Such a thing, and all things like it, were

He never pretended. One of his biographers has said that he posed painters and musicians that I blushed for him.

some ways. He would talk, for instance, in such an ingenuous way to inferior. He was sure of his high place. He was far simpler than I in a home, the dislike of solitude. I have always thought it hard to find my what I may call my homely qualities—the love of children, the love of put the theatre first. He lived in it, he died in it. He possessed none of perhaps because I have always been more woman than artist. He always qualities in Henry Irving's nature, which were unintelligible to me, What I have written so far I have written merely to indicate the but he would not speak of it.

actresses. All the same, Salvini's Othello I know he thought magnificent, it: *It was never any pleasure to him to see the acting of other actors and* Perhaps it is not true, but, as I believe it to be true, I may as well state

actress, I don't believe he ever had a glimmering notion!

theatre was as dignified as his own, but of her superb powers as an hard, and admired her as a colleague whose managerial work in the As the years went on he grew very much attached to Sarah Bern-

have shown more enthusiasm if he had seen her at her very best.

towards the performance which infuriated me, but I doubt if he would prized at my enthusiasm. There was an element of justice in his attitude diera," in which to my mind she is not at her very best. He was sur-

later, when I took him to see Eleonora Duse. The play was "La Locandiera," in which to my mind she is not at her very best. He was surprised at my enthusiasm. There was an element of justice in his attitude

The play was "Ruy Blas," and it was one of Sarah's bad days. She was walking through the part listlessly, and I was angry that there should be any ground for Henry's indifference. The same thing happened years

I was with him when he saw Sarah Bernhardt act for the first time. lookers-on, who have plenty of time to develop it.

though a generous quality of the mind and heart, and best left to

training in such matters. I had had a great deal. Judgment about colours, clothes and lighting must be *trained*. I had learned from Mr Watts, from Mr Godwin, and from other artists, until a sense of decorative effect had become second nature to me.

§ 2

Now for the Lyceum rehearsals of November, 1878. Although Henry Irving had played Hamlet for over two hundred nights in London, and for I don't know how many nights in the provinces, he always rehearsed in cloak and rapier. This careful attention to detail came back to my mind years afterwards, when he gave readings of Macbeth. He never gave a public reading without first going through the entire play at his hotel.

At the first rehearsal of Hamlet he read every one's part except mine, which he skipped, and the power that he put into each part was extraordinary. He threw himself so thoroughly into it that his skin contracted and his eyes shone. His lips grew whiter and whiter, and his skin more and more drawn as time went on, until he looked livid but still beautiful.

He never got at anything *easily*, and often I felt angry that he should waste so much of his strength in trying to teach people to do things in the right way. Very often it only ended in his producing actors who gave colourless, feeble and unintelligent imitations of him. There were exceptions, of course.

When it came to the last ten days before the date named for the production of "Hamlet," and my scenes with him were still unrehearsed, I grew very anxious and miserable. I was still a stranger in the theatre, and in awe of Henry Irving personally; but I plucked up courage, and said:

"I am very nervous about my first appearance with you. Couldn't we rehearse *our* scenes?"

"*We* shall be all right," he answered, "but we are not going to run the risk of being bottled up by a gas-man or a fiddler."

When I spoke, I think he was taking a band rehearsal. Although he did not understand a note of music, he felt, through intuition, what the music ought to be, and would pull it about and have alterations made. No one was cleverer than Hamilton Clarke, Henry's first musical director, and a most gifted composer, at carrying out his instructions. Hamilton Clarke often grew angry and flung out of the theatre, saying that it was quite impossible to do what Mr Irving required.

"Patch it together, indeed!" he used to say to me indignantly, when

known the figures. It is improbable that they were dazzling, for Irving's expences were enormous. He brought with him to America all the scenery and properties of his productions, as well as the entire company and staff from the Lyceum. Such a princely method of touring could not have been very profitable, but it had the effect of giving Henry Irving and Ellen Terry a position in America which they might never have attained by their acting alone. Their position in England was by this time one of great eminence. Before they left for America a farewell banquet was given to Irving by representative Englishmen of distinction at the old St James's Hall, a building which has long since vanished from Piccadilly. In 1883, such banquets were for men only; but women were graciously permitted to listen to post-prandial speeches from a gallery set apart for them in banquetting halls. Round this gallery at the St James's Hall, Ellen Terry, strangely excluded, according to modern ideas, from the dinner, moved after it was over, to the sound of the loudest cheers and applause of the evening. "A fairer vision than Ellen Terry, then at the zenith of her loveliness, cannot be imagined. She shone with no shallow sparkle or glitter, but with a steady radiance that filled the room, and had the peculiar quality of making everybody else invisible." (Graham Robertson)

2. *Sandbagging*. Writing in 1906, Ellen Terry obviously thought her vague notion in 1883 that she might be sandbagged in the street in America, utterly ridiculous. In 1932 it does not strike us like that.

3. *Stanford White*. Before Ellen Terry had finished her book *Stanford White* was murdered. She was in New York at the time of the trial of Harry Thaw. (1906)

4. The procedure I have followed up to now of giving a list of the parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by each chapter, cannot be applied either to this chapter or to Chapter XI in which the American tours are described. It is resumed after Chapter XII. The only new part which Ellen Terry ever played in America was Yolande in Laurence Irving's "Gode-froi and Yolande" in 1895.

seemed to me less wonderful than it had at Birmingham. At rehearsals upon him, Henry Irving's Hamlet on the first night at the Lyceum Perhaps because I was nervous and irritable about my own part from come first, the realism afterwards.

observe afterwards. It is no good observing life and bringing the result to the stage without selection, without a definite idea. The idea must My experiences convinced me that the actor must imagine first and anywhere—a face of pathetic and resigned grief.

I saw another woman laugh with a face that had no gleam of mirth very young, and the movement was as poignant as it was beautiful. room like a swallow. I never forgot it. She was very thin, very pathetic, waiting, waiting. Suddenly she threw up her hands and sped across the to see her face. It was quite vacant, but the body expressed that she was noticed a young girl gazing at the wall. I went between her and the wall too *theatrical* to teach me anything. Then, just as I was going away, I study wits astray. I was disheartened at first. There was no beauty, no nature, no pity in most of the lunatics. Strange as it may sound, they were Like all Ophelias before (and after) me, I went to the madhouse to picture.

themselves, contributed to a definite result, and kept me always in the at first. I found so much to do! Little bits of business which, slight in than most actresses. I have been told that Ophelia has "nothing to do" of *sustained* effort, but can perhaps manage a *cumulative* effort better mad scene. This was a tremendous thing for me, who am not capable Ophelia only *permeates* the scenes in which she is concerned until the and took farewell of the part for ever, I was just *damnable*!

Lane, in 1896, when I played the mad scene for Nelly Farren's benefit, Ophelia really well. It was in Chicago some ten years later. At Drury had not rehearsed enough. I can remember one occasion when I played although the critics and the public were pleased. To myself I *failed*. I poor Ophelia. When the first night came, I did not play the part well, The only person who did not profit by Henry's ceaseless labours was leaped" themselves, and he ended his days in a lunatic asylum.

right. The brilliant gifts of Clarke, before many years had passed, "over his music for "The Merchant of Venice" were all, to my mind, exactly His Danish march in "Hamlet," his Brocken music in "Faust," and "Upon my soul, it's better! The 'Guv'nor' was perfectly right."

suggested by Henry, and would confess that the music was improved. But the next day he would return with the score altered on the lines music, or he couldn't ask me to do such a thing." I was told off to smooth him down. "Mr Irving knows nothing about

concealment. For this reason, I believe, they dont have hedges or walls round their estates and gardens. "Why should we? We have nothing to hide!"

In the cars, as in the rooms at one's hotel, the "cuspidor" is always with you as a thing of beauty! When I first went to America the "Ladies' Entrance" to the hotel was really necessary, because the ordinary entrance was impassable! Since then very severe laws against spitting in public places have been passed, and there is a *great* improvement. But the habit, I suppose due to the dryness of the climate, or to the very strong cigars smoked, or to chronic catarrh, or to a feeling of independence—"This is a free country and I can spit if I choose!"—remains sufficiently disgusting to a stranger visiting the country.

The American voice is the one thing in the country that I find unbearable; yet the worst variety does not exist in many states. The Southern voice is very low in tone and soothing, like the "darky" voice. It is as different from Yankee as the Yorkshire burr is from the Cockney accent.

This question of accent is a very funny one. I had not been in America long when a friend said to me:

"We like your voice. You have so little English accent!"

This struck me as rather cool. Surely English should be spoken with an *English* accent, not with a French, German, or double-dutch one! Then I found that what they meant by an English accent was an English affectation of speech—a drawl with a tendency to "aw" and "ah" everything. They thought that every one in England, who did not miss out aspirates where they should be, and put them in where they should not be, talked of "the riva," "ma brothar," and so on. Their conclusion was, after all, quite as well founded as ours about *their* accent. The American intonation, with its freedom from violent emphasis, is, I think, rather pretty when the quality of the voice is sweet.

Of course the Americans would have their jokes about Henry's method of speech. Ristori followed us once in New York, and a newspaper man said he was not sure whether she or Mr Irving was the more difficult for an American to understand.

"He pronounces the English tongue as it is pronounced by no other man, woman or child," wrote the critic, and proceeded to give a phonetically spelled version of Irving's delivery of Shylock's speech to Antonio.

Wa thane, eit no eperes

Ah! um! yo ned m'elp

Ough! ough! Gaw too thane! Ha! um!

Yo com'n say

Ah! Shilok, um! ouch! we wode hev moanies!

Kyrle Bellew, the Osric of the production, was another man of the future, though we did not know it. He was very handsome, a tremendous

way. Rosencrantz and the rest were his school of stage-craft. accented his work as an actor always, but his chief ambition lay another Rosencrantz very nearly. Consummate care, precision, and brains characterised him, Mr Pinero looked much as he does now. He played actors who came in and out of the room. Although he was so much humanity with which the walls were peopled, or the present realities of busy in the greenroom studying by turns the pictures of past actors, youth who could never be caught loathing. He was always reading, or We had young men in the cast, too. There was one very studious of the Ramesses head in the British Museum.

With his deep-set eyes, hawk-like nose, and clear brow, he reminded me actor. His voice as the Ghost was beautiful, and his appearance splendid. Shakespeare's when his memory of the text failed—was a remarkable in "Meadisms"—he substituted the most excruciatingly funny words for Mead worthily repaid the trust. Meade, in spite of a terrible excellence In the cast of "Hamlet" Mr Forrester, Mr Chippendale, and Tom briefly.

him in preference to the two any day. "I can trust them," he explained Henry always had a fondness for "the old actor," and would engage introduce pale-coloured dresses into it.

a scene to be kept dark and mysterious," I knew better than to try and consulted me about the costumes, but if he said: "I want such and such had a finer sense of what was right for the *scene*. After this he always although I knew more of art and archæology in dress than he did, he The incident, whether Henry was right or not, led me to see that, the white dress Bolton sheeting and rabbit, and I believe it looked better. China and miniver, which had been used for the black dress, I had for the cause of needless expense worried me. So instead of the *crêpe de before!* I was very thrifty in those days, and the thought of having been I did feel a fool. What a blundering donkey I had been not to see it

this play, and that's Hamlet!"

"Yes, I did. Why not?"

"You didn't really mean that you are going to wear black in the mad scene?"

The next day Lacy came up to me:

And then they dropped the subject for that day. It was clever of him! "Oh, no!" I said.

"I should have thought you would look much better in white."

"I believe so," I answered, "but black is more interesting."

snow, and each one who managed to reach the theatre was worth a hundred on an ordinary night.

At the hotel I put up holly and mistletoe, and produced from my trunks a real Christmas pudding that my mother had made. We had it for supper, and it was very good.

It never does to repeat an experiment. Next year at Pittsburgh my little son Teddy brought me out another pudding from England. For once we were in an uncomfortable hotel, and the Christmas dinner was deplorable. It began with *burned hare soup*.

"It seems to me," said Henry, "that we aren't going to get anything to eat, but we'll make up for it by drinking!"

He had brought his own wine out with him from England, and the company took him at his word and *did* make up for it!

"Never mind!" I said, as the soup was followed by worse and worse. "There's my pudding!"

It came on blazing, and looked superb. Henry tasted it.

"Very odd," he said, "but I think this is a camphor pudding."

He said it so politely, as if he might easily be mistaken!

My maid in England had packed the pudding with my furs! It simply reeked of camphor.

So we had to dine on Henry's wine and L. F. Austin's wit. This brilliant man, now dead, acted for many years as Henry's secretary, and one of his gifts was the happy knack of hitting off people's peculiarities in rhyme. This dreadful Christmas dinner at Pittsburgh was enlivened by a collection of such rhymes, which Mr. Austin called a "Lycæum Christmas Play."

Every one roared with laughter until it came to the verse of which he was the victim, when suddenly he found the fun rather poor!

The first verse was spoken by Loveday, who announces that the "Governor" has a new play which is "*Wonderful*", a great word of Loveday's.

George Alexander replies:

But I say, Loveday, have I got a part in it,
That I can wear a cloak in and look smart in it?
Not that I care a fig for gaudy show, dear boy—
But juveniles must *look* well, don't you know, dear boy.
And shall I lordly hall and tuns of claret own?
And may I murmur love in dulcet baritone?
Tell me at least, this simple fact of it—
Can I beat Terriss hollow in one act of it? 1

lady-killer! He wore his hair rather long, had a graceful figure, and a good voice, as became the son of a preacher who had the reputation of saying the Lord's Prayer so dramatically that his congregation sobbed.

Frank Cooper, a descendant of the Kembles, another actor who has risen to eminence since, played Laertes. It was he who first led me onto the Lyceum stage. Twenty years later he became my leading man on the first tour I had taken independently of Henry Irving since my tours with Charles Kelly.

§ 3

WHEN I am asked what I remember about the first ten years at the Lyceum, I can answer in one word: *Work*. I was hardly ever out of the theatre. What with acting, rehearsing, and studying—twenty-five reference books were a "simple coming-in" for one part—I sometimes thought I should go blind and mad. It was not only for my parts at the Lyceum that I had to rehearse. From August to October I was still touring in the provinces on my own account. My brother George acted as my business manager. His enthusiasm was not greater than his loyalty and industry. When we were playing in small towns he used to rush into my dressing-room after the curtain was up and say excitedly:

"We've got twenty-five more people in our gallery than the —— Theatre opposite!"

Although he was very delicate, he worked for me like a slave. When my tours with Mr Kelly ended in 1880 and I promised Henry Irving that in future I would go to the provincial towns with him, my brother was given a position at the Lyceum, where, I fear, his scrupulous and uncompromising honesty often got him into trouble. Perquisites, or "perks," as they are called in domestic service, are one of the heaviest additions to a manager's working expenses, and George tried to fight the system. He hurt no one so much as himself.

One of my productions in the provinces was an English version of "Frou-Frou," made for me by my dear friend Mrs Comyns Carr, who for many years designed the dresses that I wore in different Lyceum plays. "Butterfly," as "Frou-Frou" was called when the play was produced in English, went well; indeed, the Scots of Edinburgh received it with overwhelming enthusiasm. It served my purpose at the time, but when I saw Sarah Bernhardt play the part I wondered that I had had the presumption to meddle with it. It was not a case of my having a different view of the character and playing it according to my imagination, as it was, for instance, when Duse played "La Dame aux Camélias," and gave a performance that one could not say was *inferior* to Bernhardt's, although it was so utterly *different*. No people in their

Once when Allen was rehearsing the supers in the Church Scene in "Much Ado about Nothing," we overheard him "show the sense" in Shakespeare like this:

"This 'Ero let me tell you is a perfect lady, a nice, innocent young thing, and when the feller she's engaged to calls 'er an 'approved wanton,' you naturally claps yer 'ands to yer swords. A wanton is a kind of —well, you know she ain't what she ought to be!"

Allen would then proceed to read the part of Claudio:

... not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

Seven or eight times the supers clapped their "'ands to their swords" without giving Allen satisfaction.

"No, no, no, that's not a bit like it, not a bit! If any of your sisters was 'ere and you 'eard me call 'er a —, would yer stand gapin' at me as if this was a bloomin' 'tea party?'"

Louis Austin's little "Lyceum Play" was presented to me with a silver tea-service, a souvenir from the gentlemen of the company, and ended up with the following pretty lines spoken by Katie Brown, a clever little girl who played all the small pages' parts at this time:

Although I'm but a little page,
Who waits for Portia's kind behest,
Mine is the part upon this stage
To tell the plot you have not guessed.
Dear lady, oft in Belmont's hall,
Whose mistress is so sweet and fair,
Your humble slaves would gladly fall
Upon their knees, and praise you there.
To offer you this little gift,
Dear Portia, now we crave your leave,
And let it have the grace to lift
Our hearts to yours this Christmas eve.
And so we pray that you may live
Thro' many, many, happy years,
And feel what you so often give—
The joy that is akin to tears!

How nice of Louis Austin! It quite made up for my mortification over the camphor pudding!

Pittsburgh has been called "hell with the lid off," and other insulting names. I have always thought it beautiful, especially at night when its turnaces make it look like a city of flame. The lovely park that the city

right senses could have accepted my "Frou-Frou" instead of Sarah's. What I lacked technically in it was *pace*. Of course, it is partly the language. English cannot be phrased as rapidly as French. But I have heard foreign actors, playing in the English tongue, show us this rapidity, this warmth, this fury—call it what you will—and have just wondered why we are, most of us, so deficient in it.

Fechter had it, so had Edwin Forrest. When strongly moved, their passions and their fervour made them swift. The more Henry Irving felt, the more deliberate he became. I said to him once: "You seem to be hampered in the vehemence of passion." "I am," he answered. This is what crippled his Othello, and made his scene with Tubal in "The Merchant of Venice" the least successful to him. What it was to the audience is another matter. But he had to take refuge in speechless rage when he would have liked to pour out his words like a torrent.

In the company which Charles Kelly and I took round the provinces in 1880 were Henry Kemble and Charles Brookfield. Young Brookfield was just beginning life as an actor, and he was so brilliantly funny off the stage that he was always a little disappointing on it. My old manageress, Mrs Wigan, first brought him to my notice, writing in a charming little note that she knew him "to have a power of *personation* very rare in an unpractised actor," and that if we could give him varied practice, she would feel it a courtesy to her.

I had reason to admire Mr Brookfield's "powers of personation" when I was acting at Buxton. He and Kemble had no parts in one of our plays, so they amused themselves during their "off" night by hiring bath-chairs and pretending to be paralysed! We were acting in a hall, and the most infirm of the invalids visiting the place to take the waters were wheeled in at the back, and up the centre aisle. In the middle of a very pathetic scene I caught sight of Kemble and Brookfield in their bath-chairs, and could not *speak* for several minutes.

Mr Brookfield does not tell this little story in his "Random Reminiscences." It is about the only one that he has left out! To my mind he is the prince of story-tellers. All the cleverness that he should have put into his acting and his play-writing (of which since those early days he has done a great deal) he seems to have put into his life. I remember him more clearly as a delightful companion than an actor, and he won my heart at once by his kindness to my little daughter Eddy, who accompanied me on this tour. He has too great a sense of humour to resent my inadequate recollection of him. Did he not in his own book quote gleefully from an obituary notice published on a false report of his death,

14, 1885, he spoke his first lines upon the stage. His mother has high hopes of this child's dramatic future. He has the instinct and the soul of art in him. Already the theatre is his home. His postures and his playfulness with the gardener, his natural and graceful movements, had been the subject of much drilling, of study and practice. He acquitted himself beautifully and received the wise congratulations of his mother, of Mr. Irving, and of the company.

That is the nicest newspaper notice I have ever read! At Chicago I made my first speech. The Haverley Theatre, at which we first appeared in 1884, was altered and rechristened the "Columbia" in 1885. I was called upon for a speech after the special performance in honour of the occasion, consisting of scenes from "Charles I.," "Louis XI," "The Merchant of Venice," and "The Bells," had come to an end. I think it must be the shortest speech on record:

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have been asked to christen your beautiful theatre. "Hail Columbia!"

§ 3

When we acted in Brooklyn we used to stay in New York and drive over that wonderful bridge every night. There were no trolley cars on it then. I shall never forget how it looked in winter, with the snow and ice on it—a gigantic trellis of dazzling white, as incredible as a dream. The old stone bridges were works of *art*. This bridge, woven of iron and steel for a length of over 500 yards, and hung high in the air over the water so that great ships can pass beneath it, is the work of *science*. It looks as if it had been built by some power, not by men at all.

It was during our week at Brooklyn in 1885 that Henry was ill, too ill to act for four nights. Alexander played Benedick, and got through it wonderfully well. Then old Mr Mead did (*did* is the word) Shylock. There was no intention behind his words or what he did.

I had such a funny batch of letters on my birthday that year. "Dear, sweet Miss Terry, etc., etc. Will you give me a piano?" "I etc., etc. Another lovely letter of other: "Dear Ellen. Come to Jesus. Mary." Another, a lovely letter of thanks from a poor woman in the most ghastly distress, and lastly an offer of a *two years' engagement* in America. There was a simple coming in for one woman acting at Brooklyn on her birthday!

Brooklyn is as sure of a laugh in New York as the mother-in-law in a London music hall. "All cities begin by being lonesome," a comedian explained, "and Brooklyn has never gotten over it." My only complaint against Brooklyn was that they would not take Fussie in at the hotel there. Fussie, during these early American tours, was still *my dog*. Later on he became Henry's. He had his affections

him that we had often had seven and eight calls without it. I used every argument, artistic and otherwise. Henry, according to his custom, was gentle, would not discuss it much, but remained obdurate. After holding out for a week, I gave in. "It's my duty to obey your orders, and do it," I said, "but I do it under protest." Then I burst into tears. It was really for his sake just as much as for mine. I thought it must bring such disgrace on him! Looking back on the incident, I find that the most humorous thing in connection with it was that the critics, never reluctant to accuse Henry of "monkeying" with Shakespeare if they could find cause, never noticed the gag at all!

Such disagreements occurred very seldom. In "The Merchant of Venice" I found that Henry Irving's Shylock necessitated an entire revision of my conception of Portia, especially in the trial scene, but here there was no point of honour involved. I had considered, and still am of the same mind, that Portia in the trial scene ought to be very *quiet*. I saw an extraordinary effect in this quietness. But as Henry's Shylock was quiet, I had to give it up. His heroic saint was splendid, but it wasn't good for Portia.

Of course, there were always injudicious friends to say that I had not "chances" enough at the Lyceum. Even my father said to me after "Othello":

"We must have no more of these Ophelias and Desdemonas!"

"Father!" I cried out, really shocked.

"They're second fiddle parts—not the parts for you, Duchess."

"Father!" I gasped out again, for really I thought Ophelia a pretty good part, and was delighted at my success in it.

But granting these *were* "second fiddle" parts, I want to make quite clear that I had my turn of "first fiddle" ones. "Romeo and Juliet," "Much

Ado About Nothing," "Olivio," and "The Cup" all gave me finer opportunities than they gave Henry. In "The Merchant of Venice" and in "Charles I" they were at least equal to his.

I have sometimes wondered what I should have accomplished without Henry Irving. I might have had "bigger" parts, but it doesn't follow that they would have been better ones, and if they had been written by contemporary dramatists my success would have been less durable. "No actor or actress who doesn't play in the 'classics'—in Shakespeare or old comedy—will be heard of long," was one of Henry Irving's sayings, by

the way, and he was right.

It was a long time before we had much talk with each other. In the "Hamlet" days, Henry Irving's melancholy was appalling. I remember feeling as if I had laughed in church when he came to the foot of the stairs leading to my dressing-room, and caught me sliding down

denly bounded on to the stage! The good children who were playing Princess Mary and Prince Henry didn't even smile; the audience remained solemn, but Henry and I nearly went into hysterics. Fussie knew directly that he had done wrong. He lay down on his stomach, then rolled over on his back, whimpering an apology—while carpenters kept on whistling and calling to him from the wings. The children took him up to the window at the back of the scene, and he stayed there cowering between them until the end of the play.

America seems to have been always fatal to Fussie. Another time when Henry and I were playing in some charity performance in which John Drew and Maude Adams were also acting, he disgraced himself again. Henry having "done his bit" and put on hat and coat to leave the theatre, Fussie thought the end of the performance must have come; the stage had no further sanctity for him, and he ran across it to the stage door barking! John Drew and Maude Adams were playing "A Pair of Lunatics." Maude Adams, who was sitting looking into the fire at the moment, did not see Fussie, and was amazed to hear John Drew departing madly from the text:

Is this a dog I see before me,
His tail towards my hand?
Come, let me clutch thee.

She began to think that he had really gone mad! When Fussie first came, Charlie was still alive, and I have often gone into Henry's dressing-room and seen the two dogs curled up in both the available chairs, Henry *standing* while he made up, rather than disturb them!

When Charlie died, Fussie had Henry's idolatry all to himself. I have caught them often sitting quietly opposite each other at Grafton Street, just adoring each other! Occasionally Fussie would thump his tail on the ground to express his pleasure.

Wherever we went in America the hotel people wanted to get rid of the dog. In the paper they had it that Miss Terry asserted that Fussie was a little terrier, while the hotel people regarded him as a pointer, and funny caricatures were drawn of a very big me with a very tiny dog, and a very tiny me with a dog the size of an elephant! Henry often walked straight out of an hotel where an objection was made to Fussie. If he wanted to stay, he had recourse to strategy. At Detroit the manager of the hotel said that dogs were against the rules. Being very tired Henry let Fussie go to the stables for the night, and sent Walter to look after him. The next morning he sent for the manager.

"Yours is a very old-fashioned hotel, isn't it?"

the banisters! He smiled at me, but didn't seem able to get over it. "Lacy," he said some days later, "what do you think! I found her the other day sliding down the banisters."

Keats writes in one of his marvellous letters that the poet lives not in one, but in a thousand worlds, and this is true of the actor of great imagination. He forms in these worlds many different natures. What was the real Henry Irving, I used to speculate!

His religious upbringing always left its mark on him, though no one could be more "raffish" and mischievous than he when entertaining friends at supper in the Beefsteak-room, or chaffing his valued adjutants, as Bram Stoker and Loveday. H. J. Loveday, our stage manager, was, I think, as absolutely devoted to Henry as any one except his fox-terrier, Fussy. Loveday's loyalty made him agree with everything that Henry said, however preposterous, and didn't Henry trade on it sometimes?

Once while he was talking to me, when he was making up, he absently took a white lily out of a bowl on the table and began to stripe and dot the petals with the stick of grease-paint in his hand. He pulled off one or two of the petals, and held it out to me.

"Pretty flower, isn't it?"

"Oh, don't be ridiculous, Henry!" I said.

"You wait!" he said mischievously. "We'll show it to Loveday."

Loveday was sent for on some business connected with the evening's performance. Henry held out the flower obtrusively, but Loveday wouldn't notice it.

"Pretty, isn't it?" said Henry carelessly.

"Very," said Loveday. "I always like those lilies. A friend of mine has his garden full of them, and he says they're not so difficult to grow if only you give 'em enough water."

Henry's delight at having "taken in" Loveday was childish. But sometimes I think Loveday must have seen through these innocent jokes, only he wouldn't have spoiled "the Guv'nor's" bit of fun for the world.

When Henry first met him he was conducting an orchestra. I forget the precise details, but I know that he gave up this position to follow Henry, that he was with him during the Bateman régime at the Lyceum, and that when the Lyceum became a thing of the past, he still kept the post of stage manager. He was literally "faithful to the end," as was only at Henry's death that his service ended.

Bram Stoker, whose recently published "Reminiscences" told, as well as it ever *can* be told, the history of the Lyceum under Irving's direction, was as good as Loveday was behind scenes. Let us leave him to tell some lovely blarney in his book.

At Niagara William Terriss slipped and nearly lost his life. At night sea give me rest.

unrest, just as the long low lines of my Sussex marshland near Winchel- merely marvellous, has always repelled me. The great cañons give me was wonderful, but not beautiful any more. The merely stupendous, the in *beauty*, with pits of colour in its waters, no one colour definite. All side of all this greatness to learn to love it. Only once did I catch Niagara falls. I'm glad I went again in other lights—but one should live by the noon tide, that garish cruel time of day, when I first came in sight of the all hard lines are blurred, how soft, how different, everything is! It was to be at their plainest. In the evening, when the shadows grow long and most height of the day's journey," most of Nature's sights appear to me the great flow of it. But at twelve o'clock, with the "sun upon the top- at it. I wouldn't go alone again, for I felt queer and wanted to follow it, and I listened—and at last it became dreadful and I was *frightened* tiful. I got away by myself from my party, and looked and looked at time I saw the great falls I thought it all more wonderful than beau- I HAVE never been to America yet without going to Niagara. The first

§ 4

The place is now given up to the rats—all light cut off, and only Barry¹ and a fireman left. Everything of mine I've moved away, including the Cat

panionship. In 1902, when he left the theatre for good, he wrote to me: always sat night after night in the same place, and Henry liked its com- that Henry was not going to resent it! From that night onwards the cat take it. But when Walter was sent out to buy some meat for it, we saw and sat on Fussie's cushion! No one knew how the "Governor" would cat, who had never been near the room in Fussie's lifetime, came down dog in his dressing-room. Then an odd thing happened. The wardrobe every one was anxious and distressed, knowing how he would miss the The first time that Henry went to the Lyceum after Fussie's death, of contrasts!

—then barked suddenly and whispered again! Such a lesson in the law His look, his way of walking! He *sang*, whispered eloquently and low We used to get hints how to get this and that from watching Fussie! of what he felt about it, but it was easy to know. His death made an enormous difference to Henry. Fussie was his con- stant companion. When he died, Henry was really alone. He never spoke

Thackeray left Boston abruptly because a sudden desire to see his children had assailed him at Christmas time!

As you sit in Mrs Fields' spacious room overlooking the Bay, you realise suddenly that before you ever came into it, Dickens and Thackeray were both here, that this beautiful old lady who so kindly smiles on you has smiled on them and on many other great men of letters long since dead. It is here that they seem most alive. This is the house where the culture of Boston seems no fad to make a joke about, but a rare and delicate reality.

This—and Fen Court, the home of that wonderful woman Mrs Jack Gardiner, who represents the present worship of beauty in Boston as Mrs Fields represents its former worship of literary men. Fen Court is a house of enchantment, a palace, and Mrs Gardiner is like a great princess in it. She has "great possessions" indeed, but her most rare one, to my mind, is her beautiful voice, even though I remember her garden by moonlight with the fountain playing, her books and her pictures, the Sargent portrait of herself presiding over one of the most splendid of those splendid rooms, where everything great in old art and new art is represented. What a portrait it is! Some one once said of Sargent that "behind the individual he finds the real, and behind the real, a whole social order."

He has painted "Mrs Jack" in a tight-fitting black dress with no ornament but her world-famed pearl necklace round her waist, and on her shoes rubies like drops of blood. The daring, intellectual face seems to say: "I have acquired everything that is worth acquiring, through the energy and effort and labour of the country in which I was born."

Mrs Gardiner's house filled me with admiration, but if I want rest and peace I just think of the houses of Mrs James Fields and Oliver Wendell Holmes. He was another personage in Boston when I first went there. Oh, the visits I inflicted on him—yet he always seemed pleased to see me, the cheery, kind man. It was generally winter when I called on him. At once it was "four feet upon a fender!" Four feet upon a fender was his idea of happiness, he told me, during one of these lengthy visits of mine to his house in Beacon Street.

He came to see us in "Much Ado about Nothing" and, next day sent me some little volumes of his work with a lovely inscription on the front page. I miss him very much when I go to Boston now.

In New York, how much I miss Mrs Beecher I could never say. The Beechers were the most wonderful pair. What an actor he would have made! He read scenes from Shakespeare to Henry and me at luncheon one day. He sat next to his wife, and they held hands nearly all the while; I thought of that time when the great preacher was tried, and all

man. He inspired confidence at once through his strong, able personality, and, as time went on, deserved it through all the knowledge he acquired and through his excellence in never making a difficulty.

"You shall have it," was no bluff from Arnott. You *did* "have it."

We could not find precisely the right material for one of my dresses in "The Cup." At last, poking about myself in quest of it, I came across the very thing at Liberty's—a saffron silk with a design woven into it by hand with many-coloured threads and little jewels. I brought a yard to rehearsal. It was declared perfect, but I declared the price prohibitive.

"It's twelve guineas a yard, and I shall want yards and yards!"

In these days I am afraid they would not only put such material on to the leading lady, but on to the supers too! At the Lyceum *wanton* extravagance was unknown.

"Where can I get anything at all like it?"

"You leave it to me," said Arnott. "I'll get it for you. That'll be all right."

"But, Arnott, it's a hand-woven Indian material. How *can* you get it?"

"You leave it to me," Arnott repeated in his slow, quiet, confident way. "Do you mind letting me have this yard as a pattern?"

He went off with it, and before the dress rehearsal had produced about twenty yards of silk, which on the stage looked better than the twelve-guinea original.

"There's plenty more if you want it," he said dryly.

He had had some raw silk dyed the exact saffron. He had had two blocks made, one red and the other black, and the design had been printed, and a few cheap spangles had been added to replace the real jewels. My toga looked beautiful.

This was but one of the many emergencies to which Arnott rose with talent and promptitude.

With the staff of the theatre he was a bit of a bully—one of those men not easily roused, but being vexed, "nasty in the extremel" As a craftsman he had wonderful taste, and could copy antique furniture so that one could not tell the copy from the original.

The great aim at the Lyceum was to get everything "rotten perfect," as theatrical slang has it, before the dress rehearsal. Father's test of being rotten perfect was not a bad one. "If you can get out of bed in the middle of the night and do your part, you're perfect. If you cant, you dont really know it!"

Henry Irving applied some such test to every one concerned in the production. I cannot remember any play at the Lyceum which did not begin punctually and end at the advertised time, except "Olivia," when a late unwite changes in the last act led to delay

As a woman off the stage Ada Rehan was even more wonderful than as a shrew on. She had a touch of dignity, of nobility, of beauty, rather like Eleonora Duse's. The mouth and the formation of the eye were lovely. Her guilelessness of make-up off the stage was so attractive! She used to come in to a supper party with a lovely shining face which

that no one in the audience sees through it!

great comedians, that you must not pretend to be serious so sincerely to do the part. She had such shy, demure fun. She understood, like all exclaim, not explain! Directly she came on I knew how she was going above all, her Katharine in "The Taming of the Shrew"! I can only Wife, her Helena, her performance in "The Railroad of Love"! And Barrymore's when Miss Ethel is speaking very nicely—her smiles and splendid high comedy! Then the charm of her voice—a little like Ethel The audacious, superb, quaint, Irish creature! Never have I seen such pany and before she had played in the classics and won enduring fame. I did know her for what she was, even in that brilliant "all-star" com- or any rubbish of that kind; the public were already mad about her, but on the stage." It was Ada Rehan! Now of course I didn't "discover" her company who is the most lovely, humorous darling I have ever seen enchantment. I wrote to Mr Daly and said: "You've got a girl in your American acting had reached. My first night at Daly's was a night of The Daly players were a revelation to me of the pitch of excellence which

§ 6

My DARLING NELLIE,—

You cannot know how it soothes my extreme heart-loneliness to receive a token of remembrance, and word of cheer from those I have faithfully loved, and who knew and revered my husband. . . . Ellen Terry is very sweet as Ellaline, but dearer far as my Nellie.

her and sent my picture, and she replied:

That a woman who had been brought up like this should form a friendship with me naturally caused a good deal of talk. But what did she care! She remained my true friend until her death, and wrote to me constantly when I was in England—such loving, wise letters, full of charity and simple faith. In 1889, after her husband's death, I wrote to her and sent my picture, and she replied:

"Oh, father, you've spoiled my dress!"

"Oh, father, why did you do that?"

"I thought you might be cold," said the severe father significantly and malevolently.

been made in writing them out. Parts at the Lyceum were written, or printed, never typed.

These first two rehearsals—the one devoted to the reading of the play, and the other to the comparing of the parts—were generally arranged for Thursday and Friday. Then there was two days' grace. On Monday came the first stand-up rehearsal on the stage.

We then did one act straight through, and, after that, straight through again, even if it took all day. There was no luncheon interval. People took a bite when they could, or went without. Henry himself generally went without. The second day exactly the same method was pursued with the second act. All the time Henry gave the stage his personal direction, gave it keenly, and gave it whole. He was the sole superintendent of his rehearsals, with Mr Loveday as his working assistant, and Mr Allen as his prompter. This despotism meant much less wasted time than when actor-manager, "producer," literary adviser, stage manager, and any one who likes to offer a suggestion, are all competing in giving orders and advice to a company.

Henry Irving never spent much time on the women in the company, except in regard to position. Sometimes he would ask me to suggest things to them, to do for them what he did for the men. The men were as much like him when they tried to carry out his instructions as brass is like gold; but he never grew weary of "coaching" them, down to the most minute detail. Once during the rehearsals of "Hamlet" I saw him growing more and more fatigued with his efforts to get the actors who opened the play to perceive his meaning. He wanted the first voice to ring out like a pistol shot.

"Who's there?"

"Do give it up," I said. "It's no better!"

"Yes, it's a little better," he answered quietly, "and so it's worth doing." From the first the scenery, or substitute scenery, was put upon the stage for rehearsal, and the properties, or substitute properties, were to hand.

After each act had been gone through twice each day, it came to half an act once in a whole day, because of the development of detail. There was no detail too small for Henry Irving's notice. He never missed anything that was cumulative—that would contribute something to the whole effect.

The messenger who came in to announce something always needed a great deal of rehearsal. There were processions, and half processions, quiet bits when no word was spoken. There was *timing*. Nothing was left to chance.

In the master carpenter, Arnott, a Yorkshireman, we had a splendid

a few days' holiday from your weary work.

There is a brilliant blue sea before my windows, with purple mountains as a background and silver-topped olives and rich green pines in the middle distance. I wish you could drop down upon us in this golden land for the two Mr Irving acted so wonderfully in that play?

Will you be so very kind as to tell me the name of your character and one I had seen you in, and I wish to write my delightful impression of it. small part you made so attractive in the "Lyons' Mail." It was the first book—which will appear shortly; but I cannot remember the name of the I am saying all kinds of fine things about your beautiful work in my

Dear Miss Terry,—

GRAND HOTEL DE VALESCURE,
ST RAPHAEL, FRANCE.

the stage, where she had such a brief and brilliant career. happy now as she was then—that she made no mistake when she left Raphael soon after her marriage. It is nice to think that she is just as it did not mean happiness. I have a letter from her, written from St. Petersburg and her better than most, since I had had success too, and knew that gained. They never made her happy, she once told me, and I could understand her. But she abandoned her triumphs almost as soon as they were won! You will take America by storm." Certainly she took *England* by storm! "Since seeing you in Portia and Leticia," she wrote, "I am convinced you would like me."

She cheered me before I first sailed for America by saying that her people would like me.

good daughter, a good wife, a good woman. kind as beautiful—constantly working for her religion—*always* kind, a the stage. I personally know her only as a most beautiful woman—as where, I was particularly struck by her modest evasion of publicity off Hearing her praises sung on all sides, and her beauties spoken of everywhere, and she has done me many little kindnesses. pleasure of meeting her, and she has done me many little kindnesses. act I was very ill and ordered abroad. I have, however, had the great Irving, I was in America, and another time when I might have seen her during her reign at the Lyceum Theatre, which she rented from Henry I never saw Mary Anderson act. That seems a strange admission, but

girls.

and has an extraordinary effect—an *educational* effect upon all American all parts she herself is most adorable. She is just worshipped in America, Minister" and in "Quality Street" I think she is at her best, but above of whom I have seen most, and "to see her is to love her!" In "The Little During my more recent tours in America Maude Adams is the actress

make a great success in it.

ought to play "Lady Teazle." She may take it from me that she would

tricks of the business, can play the drunkard; but to play a good man sincerely, as he did here, to show that double thing, the look of guilt which an innocent man wears when accused of crime, requires great acting, for "*the look*" is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual emotion—and this delicate emotion can only be perfectly expressed when the actor's heart and mind and soul and skill are in absolute accord.

In dual parts Irving depended little on make-up. Make-up was, indeed, always his servant, not his master. He knew its uselessness when not informed by the *spirit*. "The letter" (and in characterisation "make-up" is the letter) "killeth—the spirit giveth life." Irving's Lesurques was different from his Dubosc because of the way he held his shoulders, because of his expression. He always took a deep interest in crime (an interest which his sons have inherited), and often went to the police-court to study the faces of the accused. He told me that the innocent man generally looked guilty and hesitated when asked a question, but that the round, wide-open eyes corrected the bad impression. The result of this careful watching was seen in his expression as Lesurques. He opened his eyes wide. As Dubosc he kept them half closed.

Our productions from 1878 to 1887 were "Hamlet," "The Lady of Lyons," "Eugene Aram," "Charles I," "The Merchant of Venice," "Iolanthe," "The Cup," "The Belle's Stratagem," "Othello," "Romeo and Juliet," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Twelfth Night," "Olivia," "Faust," "Raising the Wind," and "The Amber Heart." I give this list to keep myself straight. My mental division of the years at the Lyceum is *before* "Macbeth," and *after*. I divide them thus because I consider "Macbeth" the most important of all our productions. I judge it by the amount of preparation and thought that it cost us and by the discussion which it provoked.

Of the characters played by Henry Irving in the plays of the first division—in the pre-Macbeth period—I reckon Hamlet his greatest triumph. That may be because it was the only part that was big enough for him. It was more difficult, and he had more scope in it than in any other. If there had been a finer part than Hamlet, that particular part would have been his finest.

When one praises an actor in this way, one is always open to accusations of prejudice, hyperbole, uncritical gush, unreasoned eulogy, and the rest. Must a careful and deliberate opinion *always* deny a great man genius? If so, no careful and deliberate opinions from me!

I have no doubt in the world of Irving's genius—no doubt that he is with David Garrick and Edmund Kean, rather than with other actors of great talents and great achievements—actors who rightly won high

will—I am Shak—es—peare.”

By
“HAM—A—LETTE.”

announced in thrilling tones:

After a portentous wait, on swept a lady with an extraordinarily flashing eye, a masculine and muscular outside. Pounding the book with terrific energy, as if she wished to knock the stuffing out of it, she

water and a book were placed on it. unnecessary alterations in the position of the reading desk. A glass of An attendant came on the platform and made trivial and apparently The studious young clerk went to the reading.

a beacon and a star. pation, for in those days Tradition was everything—the name of Kemble going to give a reading of the play. His heart throbbed high with anticipation, for in those days Tradition was everything—the name of Kemble Henry Irving saw that Mrs Butler, the famous Fanny Kemble, was he was a clerk, dreamed of a day when he might play it, the young Having lived with Hamlet nearly all his life, studied the part when that I have quoted justifies it.

Now, shall I put on record what Henry Irving thought of Fanny Kemble! If there is a touch of malice in my doing so, surely the passage

an exhibition extremely curious as well as entertaining. play of Shakespeare's acted I do not know when. I think I should find such I thought much more like Young than my father or uncle. I have not seen a that he looked like my people, and sent me a photograph to prove it, which from the point of view of his critics. Edward Fitzgerald wrote me word idea of his performance, and a very hazy one indeed of the part itself as seen rather elaborate ones of his Hamlet, which, however, give me no very distinct I have seen some of the accounts and criticisms of Mr. Irving's acting, and

and made her jealous, I suppose, for the dead kings among her kindred: had his share of misfortune and failure before he came into his kingdom Fanny Kemble thought it necessary to write as follows of one who had of Irving's *originality*. The old school were not usually so generous. My father, who worshipped Macready, put Irving above him because mocked and derided him.

ated for a long time, that some found him an acquired taste, that others find no contradiction of my testimony in the fact that he was not appreciated for a long time, that some found him an acquired taste, that others nearly all of them denied what I assert. "Now, who shall arbitrate?" I Since my great comrade died I have read many estimates of him, and opinions from the multitude of their day, but who have not left behind them an impression of that inexplicable thing we call genius.

Memorial Fund. Mr Furness died soon after his happy thought had had this happy result.

3. *Godetroi and Yolande*. The American performances were the only public ones ever accorded to Laurence Irving's play, but in 1915 Edith Craig produced it in London under the auspices of the Pioneer Players, a Sunday play-producing Society, complimented by Bernard Shaw in a note in the Shaw-Terry correspondence on "having done more for the theatrical vanguard than any other of the comic theatres."

Laurence Irving's gratitude to Ellen Terry for her keen interest in "Godetroi and Yolande" is expressed in a letter written shortly after he had read the play to her:

I cannot tell you how deeply I felt all your generous enthusiasm over my play. Encouragement such as you give me will spur me on to renewed efforts, so that I may hope to merit it again. I will have another copy of the play got ready, and then I will send it to you for the comments you so kindly offered to make. That copy will then be more valuable for your comments than in itself it could ever hope to be. I do not know in what words to tell you how honoured I feel at such an offer from the first of English actresses.

After Laurence Irving gave up diplomacy for which he had been educated, and became an actor, his relations with his father which in his boyhood were distant, owing to the permanent estrangement of his parents, were changed. Laurence, as a member of the Lyceum Company, to which he was promoted after a brief training under Frank Benson, was brought into close contact with his father. One result of this was a friendship between Laurence and his father's "leading lady" which lasted until Laurence's untimely death in 1914. The promise of a great career in the theatre was broken when the *Empress of Ireland*, with Laurence Irving on board, sank in the River St Lawrence. Ellen Terry recognised his genius in its ugly duckling stage, and seems to have understood him better than his father. "My Irving boy," as she often called him, was very dear to her, and his presence in the Lyceum Company brought her happiness at an unhappy time in her life.

4. *Ellen Terry's Third Marriage*. The brief allusion to this event at the end of the chapter is amplified in Part II, Chapter I, when I take up the narrative of Ellen Terry's life at the point where she broke it off.

"I suppose this is all right," thought the young clerk, a little dismayed at the fierce and sectional enunciation.

Then the reader came to Act 1, Sc. 2, which a certain old actor (to leave the Kemble reading for a minute), with but a hazy notion of the text, used to begin:

Although of Hamlet, our dear brother's death,
The memory be—memory be—(What *is* the damned colour?) *green* . . .

Well, when Fanny Kemble came to this scene the future Hamlet began to listen more intently.

Gertrude: Let not thy mother lose *her* prayers, Ham—a—lette.

Hamlet: I shall in all respects obey *you*, madam (obviously with a fiery flashing eye of hate upon the King).

When he heard this and more like it, Henry Irving exercised his independence of judgment and refused to accept Fanny Kemble's view of the gentle, melancholy, and well-bred Prince of Denmark.

He was a stickler for tradition, and always studied it, followed it, sometimes to his own detriment, but he was not influenced by the Kemble Hamlet, except that for some time he wore the absurd John Philip feather, which he would have been much better without!

Let me pray that I, representing the old school, may never look on the new school with the patronising airs of "Old Fitz"¹ and Fanny Kemble. I wish that I could *see* the new school of acting in Shakespeare, however. Shakespeare must be kept up, or we shall become a third-rate nation!

Henry told me this story of Fanny Kemble's reading without a spark of ill-nature, but with many a gleam of humour. He told me at the same time of the wonderful effect that Adelaide Kemble (Mrs Sartoris) used to make when she recited Shelley's lines, beginning:

Good-night—Ah, no, the hour is ill
Which severs those it should unite.
Let us remain together still—
Then it will be *good-night!*

§ 7

I HAVE already said that I never could cope with Pauline Deschappelles in "The Lady of Lyons," and why Henry wanted to play Melnotte was a mystery. Claude Melnotte after Hamlet! Oddly enough, Henry was always attracted by fustian. He simply revelled in the big speeches. The play was beautifully staged; the garden scene alone probably cost as much as the whole of "Hamlet." The march past the window of the appar-

¹ Edward FitzGerald.

One of his greatest moments was in the last act after the battle. He looked like a great famished wolf, weak with the weakness of an exhausted actor can do.

His conception of Macbeth attacked, and even derided, by the critics of 1888, seemed to me then, and seems to me now, as clear as daylight. But the carrying out of the conception was unequal. Henry's imagination was sometimes his worst enemy. It tempted him to try and do more than any actor can do.

Henry had played "Macbeth" before at the Lyceum in the days of the Bateman management; he told me that by intuition he had got the right idea of the character, and had since come to know from fresh study that it was *right*. His confidence in the rightness of his conception was not in the least shaken by criticisms of it, and he always maintained that as "Macbeth" he did his finest work. "And we know when we do our best," he would add. "We are the only people who do know." Perhaps he was right in putting his Macbeth before his Hamlet, yet I think his *performance* of "Hamlet" was the greater.

I think things are going well, considering the time we've been at it, but very sorry afterwards when I don't seem to heed what I so much value. . . . I see so much that is wanting that it seems almost impossible to get through properly. "Tonight, commence, Mathias. If you sleep you are lost!" (A quotation from "The Bells")

Tonight, if possible, the last act. I want to get these great multitudinous scenes over and then we can attack *our* scenes. . . . Your sensitiveness is so acute that you must suffer sometimes. You are not like anybody else. You see things with such lightning quickness and unerring instinct that dull fools like myself grow irritable and impatient sometimes. I feel confused when I'm thinking of one thing, and disturbed by another. That's all. But I do feel very sorry afterwards when I don't seem to heed what I so much value. . . .

Knowing what a task I had before me, I began to get anxious and worried about "Lady Mac." Henry wrote me such a nice letter about this: of Henry's, it was exactly what he wanted!

When the orchestra played the new version, based on that humming once!

"Much better than mine, Irving—much better—I'll rough it out at wonderful quickness and open-mindedness, caught his meaning at once. composer what he was going to do at certain situations. Sullivan, with him. He walked up and down the stage humming, and showing the compose music! Sir Arthur Sullivan's music at first did not quite please Henry seems to have been able to do anything, even to draw and to ished at the spirited impressionism of these sketches. For his "purpose" My acting edition of the play is riddled with rough sketches by him of different groups. Artists to whom I have shown them have been astonished at the spirited impressionism of these sketches. For his "purpose" Henry seems to have been able to do anything, even to draw and to compose music! Sir Arthur Sullivan's music at first did not quite please him. He walked up and down the stage humming, and showing the composer what he was going to do at certain situations. Sullivan, with wonderful quickness and open-mindedness, caught his meaning at once. "Much better than mine, Irving—much better—I'll rough it out at

ently unending army—that good old trick which sends the supers flying round the back-cloth to cross the stage again and again—created a superb effect. The curtain used to go up and down as often as we liked and chose to keep the army marching! The play ran some time, I suppose because even at our worst the public found *something* in our acting to like.

As Ruth Mcadowes in "Eugene Aram" I had very little to do, but what there was, was worth doing. The last act, like the last act of "Ravenswood," gave me opportunity. It was staged with a great appreciation of grim and poetic effect. Henry always thought that the dark, overhanging branch of the cedar was like the cruel outstretched hand of Fate. He called it the Fate Tree, and used it in "Hamlet," in "Eugene Aram," and in "Romeo and Juliet."

In "Eugene Aram," the Fate Tree drooped low over the graves in the churchyard. On one of them Henry used to be lying in a black cloak as the curtain went up on the last act. Not until a moonbeam struck the dark mass did you see that it was a man.

He played all such parts well. Melancholy and the horrors had a peculiar fascination for him, especially in these early days. But his recitation of the poem "Eugene Aram" was finer than anything he did in the play, especially when he did it in a frock-coat. No one ever looked so well in a frock-coat! He was always ready to recite it, would do it after supper, anywhere. We had a talk about it once, and I told him that it was *too much* for a room. No man was ever more willing to listen to suggestion or less obstinate about taking advice. He immediately moderated his methods when reciting in a room, making it all less theatrical. The play was a good repertory play, and we did it later on in America with success. There the part of Houseman was played by Terriss, who was quite splendid in it, and at Chicago my little boy Teddy made his second appearance on any stage as Joey, a gardener's boy. He had, when still a mere baby, come on to the stage at the Court in "Olivia," and this must be counted his *first* appearance, although the chroniclers, ignoring both that and Joey in "Eugene Aram," say he never appeared at all until he played an important part in "The Dead Heart."

It is because of Teddy that "Eugene Aram" is associated in my mind with one of the most beautiful sights upon the stage that I ever saw in my life. He was about ten or eleven at the time, and as he tied up the stage roses, his cheeks, untouched by rouge, put the reddest of them to shame! He was graceful and natural; he spoke his lines with ease, and smiled all over his face! "A born actor!" I said, although Joey was my son. Whenever I think of him in that stage garden, I weep for pride, and for sorrow, too, because before he was thirty my son had left the

stage—he who had it all in him. I have good reason to be proud of what he has done since, but I regret the lost actor *always*.

Henry Irving could not at first keep away from melancholy pieces. Henrietta Maria was another sad part for me, but I used to play it well, except when I cried too much in the last act. The play had been one of the Bateman productions, and I had seen Miss Isabel Bateman as Henrietta Maria and liked her, although I could not find it possible to follow her example and play the part with a French accent! I constantly catch myself saying of Henry Irving, "That is by far the best thing that he ever did." I could say it of some things in "Charles I"—of the way he gave up his sword to Cromwell, of the way he came into the room in the last act and shut the door behind him. It was not a man coming on to a stage to meet some one. It was a king going to the scaffold, quietly, unobtrusively, and courageously. However often I played that scene with him, I knew that when he first came on he was not aware of my presence nor of any *earthly* presence: he seemed to be already in heaven.

Much has been said of his "make-up" as Charles I. Edwin Long painted him a triptych of Vandyck heads, which he always had in his dressing-room, and which is now in my possession. He used to come on to the stage looking precisely like the Vandyck portraits, but not because he had been busy building up his face with wig-paste and similar atrocities. His make-up in this, as in other parts, was the process of *assisting subtly and surely the expression from within*. It was elastic, and never hampered him. It changed with the expression. As Charles, he was assisted by Nature, who had given him the most beautiful Stuart hands, but his clothes most actors would have consigned to the dust-bin! Before we had done with Charles I—we played it together for the last time in 1902—these clothes were really threadbare. Yet he looked in them every inch a king.

His care of detail may be judged from the fact that in the last act his wig was not only greyer, but had far less hair in it. I should hardly think it necessary to mention this if I had not noticed how many actors seem to think that an effect of age may be procured by the simple expedient of dipping their heads, covered with mats of flourishing hair, into a flour-barrell!

Unlike most stage kings, he never seemed to be *assuming* dignity. He was very, very simple.

Wills has been much blamed for making Cromwell out to be such a wretch—a mean blackguard, not even a great bad man. But in plays the villain must not compete for sympathy with the hero, or both fall to the ground! I think that Wills showed himself in this play, at any rate in

I see in Landry a great deal of Manette—that same vacant gaze into years gone by when he crouched in his dungeon nursing his wrongs.... I shall send you another book soon to put any of your alterations and additions in. I've added a lot of little things with a few lines for you—very good, I think, though I say it as shouldnt—I know you'll laugh! They are perhaps not startlingly original, but better than the original, anyhow! Here they are—last act!

"Ah, Robert, pity me. By the recollections of our youth, I implore you to save my boy!" (*Now for 'em!*)

"If my voice calls a tone that ever fell sweetly upon your ear, have pity on me! If the past is not a blank, if you once loved, have pity on me!" (*Bravo!*) Now I call that very good, and if the "If" and the "pity" don't bring down the house, well it's a pity! I pity the pititices!

...I've just been copying out my part in an account book—a little more handy to put in one's pocket. It's really very short, but difficult to act, though, and so is ours. I like this "piling up" sort of acting, and I am sure you will, when you play the part. It's restful. "The Bells" is that sort of thing.

The crafty old Henry! All this was to put me in conceit with my part! Many people at this time put me in conceit with my son, including dear Burne-Jones with his splendid gift of impulsive enthusiasm.

THE GRANGE,
WEST KENSINGTON, W.

Sunday.

MOST DEAR LADY,—

I thought all went wonderfully last night, and no sign could I see of hitch or difficulty; and as for your boy, he looked a lovely little gentleman—and in his cups was perfect, not overdoing by the least touch a part always perilously easy to overdo. I too had the impertinence to be a bit nervous for you about him, but not when he appeared—so altogether I was quite happy. ... Irving was very noble. I thought I had never seen his face so beautiful before—no, that isn't the word, and to hunt for the right one would be so like judicious criticism that I won't. Exalted and splendid it was—and you were you—YOU—and so all was well. I rather wanted more shouting and distant roar in the Bastille Scene—since the walls fell, like Jericho, by noise. A good dreadful growl always going on would have helped, I thought—and that was the only point where I missed anything.

And I was very glad you got your boy back again and that Mr Irving was ready to have his head cut off for you; so it had what I call a good ending, and I am in bright spirits today, and ever

Your real friend,

E. B.-J.

He was indeed one of my real friends, and his letters—he was a heaven-born letter-writer—were like no one else's; full of charm and

the last act, a great playwright. It gave us both wonderful opportunities, yet very few words were spoken. Some people thought me at my best in the camp scene in the third act, where I had even fewer lines to speak. I was proud of it myself when I found that it had inspired Oscar Wilde to write me this lovely sonnet:

In the lone tent, waiting for victory,
She stands with eyes marred by the mists of pain,
Like some wan lily overdrained with rain;
The clamorous clang of arms, the ensanguined sky,
War's ruin, and the wreck of chivalry
To her proud soul no common fear can bring;
Bravely she carrieth for her Lord, the King,
Her soul aflame with passionate ecstasy.
O, hair of gold! O, crimson lips! O, face
Made for the luring and the love of man!
With thee I do forget the toil and stress,
The loveless road that knows no resting place,
Time's straitened pulse, the soul's dread weariness,
My freedom, and my life republican!

That phrase "wan lily" represented perfectly what I had tried to convey, not only in this part but in Ophelia. I hope I thanked Oscar enough at the time. Now he is dead, and I cannot thank him any more.... I had so much *bad* poetry written to me that these lovely sonnets from a real poet should have given me the greater pleasure. "He often has the poet's heart, who never felt the poet's fire." There is more good *heart* and kind feeling in most of the verses written to me than real poetry. "One must discriminate," even if it sounds unkind. At the time that Whistler was having one of his most undignified "rows" with a sitter over a portrait and wrangling over the price, another artist was painting frescoes in a cathedral for nothing. "It may be sad that it should be so," a friend said to me, "but *one must discriminate*. The man haggling over the sixpence is the greater artist!"

§ 8

ANOTHER sonnet from Oscar Wilde—to Portia this time—is the first document that I find in connection with "The Merchant," as the play was always called by the theatre staff.

I marvel not Bassanio was so bold
To peril all he had upon the lead,
Or that proud Aragon bent low his head,
Or that Morocco's fiery heart grew cold;

my family and been altogether horrible! When everything goes just as I like, and painting prospers a bit, and the air is warm and friends well and everything perfectly comfortable, I can just manage to behave decently, and a spoilt fool I am—that's the truth. But wherever you were, some garden would grow.

Yes, I know Winchelsea and Rye and Lympne and Hythe—all bonny places, and Hythe has a church it may be proud of. Under the sea is another Winchelsea, a poor drowned city—about a mile out at sea, I think, always marked in old maps as "Winchelsea Dround." If ever the sea goes back on that changing coast there may be great fun when the spires and towers come up again. It's a pretty land to drive in.

I am growing downright stupid—I can't work at all nor think of anything. Will my wits ever come back to me?

And when are you coming back—when will the Lyceum be in its right-ful hands again? I refuse to go there till you come back...

I have finished four pictures: come and tell me if they will do. I have worked so long at them that I know nothing about them, but I want you to see them—and like them if you can.

All Saturday and Sunday and Monday they are visible. Come any time you can that suits you best—only come.

I do hope you will like them. If you don't you must really pretend to, else I shall be heartbroken. And if I knew what time you would come and which day, I would get Margaret here.

I have had them about four years—long before I knew you, and now they are done and I can hardly believe it. But tell me pretty pacifying lies and say you like them, even if you find them rubbish.

Your devoted and affectionate
E. B.-J.

§ 3

I went the next day to see the pictures with Eddy. They were the "Briar Rose" series. They were *beautiful*. The lovely Lady Granby (now Duchess of Rutland) was there—reminding me, as always, of the reflection of something in water on a misty day. When she was Miss Violet Lindsay she did a drawing of me as Portia in the doctor's robes, which I think is very like me, as well as having all the charming qualities of her well-known pencil portraits.

Plays adapted from novels are generally unsatisfactory. A whole story cannot be conveyed in three hours, and every reader of the story looks for something not in the play. Wills took from "The Vicar of Wakefield" an episode, and did it right well, but there was no *episode* in "The Bride of Lammermoor" for Merivale to take. He tried to traverse the whole ground, and failed. But he gave me some lovely things to do in

For in that gorgeous dress of beaten gold,
Which is more golden than the golden sun,
No woman Veronese looked upon
Was half so fair as thou whom I behold.
Yet fairer when with wisdom as your shield
The sober-suited lawyer's gown you donned,
And would not let the laws of Venice yield
Antonio's heart to that accursed Jew—
O, Portia! take my heart; it is thy due:
I think I will not quarrel with the Bond.

Henry Irving's Shylock dress was designed by Sir John Gilbert. It was never replaced, and only once cleaned by Henry's dresser and valet, Walter Collinson: Walter, I think, replaced "Doody," Henry's first dresser at the Lyceum during the run of "The Merchant of Venice." Walter like Doody was a wig-maker by trade. It was Doody who, on being asked his opinion of a production, said that it was fine—"not a *join*¹ to be seen anywhere!" It was Walter who was asked by Henry to say which he thought his best part. Walter could not be "drawn" for a long time. At last he said Macbeth.

This pleased Henry immensely, for he fancied himself in Macbeth more than in any other part.

"It is generally conceded to be Hamlet," said Henry.

"Oh, no, sir," said Walter, "Macbeth. You sweat twice as much in that."

In appearance Walter was very like Shakespeare's bust in Stratford Church. He was a most faithful and devoted servant, and was the only person with Henry Irving when he died. Quiet in his ways, discreet, gentle, and very quick, he was the ideal dresser.

The Lyceum production of "The Merchant of Venice" was not so strictly archæological as the Bancrofts' had been, but it was very gravely beautiful and effective. If less attention was paid to details of costume and scenery, the play itself was arranged and acted very attractively, and always went with a swing. To the end of my partnership with Henry Irving it was a safe "draw" both in England and America. By this time I must have played Portia over a thousand times. In a severe criticism of my performance in *Blackwood's Magazine* it was suggested that I showed too much of a "coming-on" disposition in the Casket Scene. This affected me for years, and made me self-conscious and uncomfortable. At last I lived it down. Any suggestion of *indelicacy* in my treatment of a part always blighted me. Mr Dodgson (Lewis Carroll, of the immortal "Alice

¹ A "join" in theatrical wig-makers' parlance is the point where the frontpiece of the wig ends and the actor's forehead begins.

My difficulty is this:—Why in the world did not Hero (or at any rate Beatrice on her behalf) prove an "alibi" in answer to the charge? It seems certain that she did *not* sleep in her room that night; for how could Margaret venture to open the window and talk from it, with her mistress asleep in the room? It would be sure to wake her. Besides Borachio says, after promising that Margaret shall speak with him out of Hero's chamber window, "I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent." (*How* he could possibly manage any such thing is another difficulty, but I pass over that.) Well then, granting that Hero slept in some other room that night, why didn't she say so? When Claudio asked her: "What man was he you talked with yesterday?" I talked at your window betwixt twelve and one?" Why doesn't she reply: "I talked with no man at that hour, my lord. Nor was I in my chamber yesterday, but in another, far from it, remote." And this she could, of course, prove by the

Now I'm going to put before you a "Heroic" puzzle of mine, but please remember I do not ask for your solution of it, as you will persist in believing, if I ask your help in a Shakespeare difficulty, that I am only jesting! However, if you won't attack it yourself, perhaps you would ask Mr Irving some day how *he* explains it?

some people make puzzles, anagrams, or Limericks!

Mr Dodgson was an ardent playgoer. He took the keenest interest in all the Lyceum productions, frequently writing to me to point out slips in the dramatist's logic which only he would ever have noticed! He did not even spare Shakespeare. I think he wrote these letters for fun, as later years with their children.

Mr Dodgson was one of my earliest friends among literary folk. I can't remember a time when I didn't know him. He saw Kate and me act as children, and gave us a copy of "Alice in Wonderland." He always gave any new young friend "Alice" at once. It was his way of following up the introduction and establishing pleasant relations. The "Alice" ceremony was gone through with every member of the Terry family, and in later years with their children.

Casquet Scene over again.

But I felt ashamed and shy whenever I played that scene. It was the much more so when she sees it where harm is not."

"It would have seemed awful for a *child* to see harm where harm is; how "I thought you only knew *nice* children," was all the answer I gave him. of me as he could be of any one over the age of ten, but I was *furious*. I had known dear Mr Dodgson for years and years. He was as fond

fact that it could affect a mere child disagreeably, I ought to alter my business! in "Wonderland") once brought a little girl to see me in "Faust." He wrote and told me that she had said (where Margaret begins to undress): "Where is it going to stop?" and that perhaps, in consideration of the

evidence of the housemaids, who must have known that she had occupied another room that night.

But even if Hero might be supposed to be so distracted as not to remember where she had slept the night before, or even whether she had slept *anywhere*, surely *Beatrice* has her wits about her; And when an arrangement was made, by which she was to lose, for one night, her twelve-months' bed-fellow, is it conceivable that she didn't know *where* Hero passed the night? Why didn't *she* reply:

But good my lord sweet Hero slept not there:
She had another chamber for the nonce.
'Twas sure some counterfeit that did present
Her person at the window, aped her voice,
Her mien, her manners, and hath thus deceived
My good Lord Pedro and this company?

With all these excellent materials for proving an "alibi" it is incomprehensible that no one should think of it. If only there had been a barrister present, to cross-examine *Beatrice*!

"Now, ma'am, attend to me, please, and speak up so that the jury can hear you. Where did you sleep last night? Where did Hero sleep? Will you swear that she slept in her own room? Will you swear that you do not know where she slept?" I feel inclined to quote old Mr. Weller and to say to *Beatrice* at the end of the play (only I'm afraid it isn't etiquette to speak across the footlight):

"Oh, Samivel, Samivel, vy vornt there a halibi?"

Mr Dodgson's kindness to children was wonderful. He *really* loved them and put himself out for them. The children he knew who wanted to go on the stage were those who came under my observation, and nothing could have been more touching than his ceaseless industry on their behalf.

I want to thank you, he wrote to me in 1894 from Oxford, as heartily as words can do it for your true kindness in letting me bring D. behind the scenes to you. You will know without my telling you what an intense pleasure you thereby gave to a warm-hearted girl, and what love (which I fancy you value more than mere admiration) you have won from her. Her wild longing to try the stage will not, I think, bear the cold light of day when once she has tried it, and has realised what a lot of hard work and weary waiting and "hope deferred" it involves. She doesn't, so far as I know, absolutely need, as N. does, to earn money for her own support. But I fancy she will find life rather a *pinch*, unless she can manage to do something in the way of earning money. So I don't like to advise her strongly *against* it, as I would any one who had no such need.

Also thank you, thank you with all my heart for all your great kindness to N. She does write so brightly and gratefully about all you do for her and say to her.

mischievous he could be about some of his guests. I remember some on saying to him after the first night of "Ravenswood": "I don't fancy that your hopes will be quite fulfilled about the play. I heard one or two in the Beefsteak Room on Saturday night—"

"Ah, yes!" Henry interrupted in his most gentle voice. "But they were friends! One must not expect too much from friends. The paying public will, I think, decide favourably."

"This is the Irving, the Irving at play, you can see in the Bastien-Lepage portrait. The artist was enchanted with Henry's face and expressed a strong desire to paint him. The portrait originated at a supper in the Beefsteak Room at which both Bastien-Lepage and Sarah Bernhardt were guests. The artist did a sketch of Henry on a sheet of note-paper, then another of Sarah, and gave them to me. They are among my most precious relics. Henry gave Bastien-Lepage two sittings for the portrait afterwards at Grafton Street, but it is a "Beefsteak" portrait all the same.

How brilliantly, delightfully and whimsically Alfred Gilbert talked to me the other day, when I met him again in Bruges, of Beefsteak suppers at which he had been present! He is the man who can make you live them, and first nights at the Lyceum, over again! I think it was after one of these suppers that he took the whole party to drink at the fountain in Piccadilly Circus the night before his statue of Eros was unveiled. Years later, another sculptor, George Frampton, told me of his certainty that the statue would stand the test of time, and hold its own with the finest work of the same kind done by the great masters of the Renaissance period. "I have no patience with people who criticise it as inappropriate to its surroundings. That is the fault of the surroundings. In a more enlightened age than this, Piccadilly Circus will be destroyed and rebuilt merely to provide a finer setting for Gilbert's jewel."

We were, as he spoke, looking at Henry's death-mask, which Frampton had taken, and the dead face dissolved into that living one with the quizzed expression which it wore at the Beefsteak suppers. Then came a vision of Alfred Gilbert's Beethoven-like head with its lion-like mane of raven hair, and I began to cry. Henry dead, and Gilbert in exile. Neither appreciated in this age as they should be. The Beefsteak Room a lumber-room again, if it exists at all in the rebuilt Lyceum!

NOTES TO CHAPTER XII

1. *The Lyceum Problem*. When Henry Irving in the year 1878 engaged Ellen Terry as his "leading lady," it is improbable, as he had no personal knowledge of her remarkable powers, that he foresaw the problem which was to arise out of the engagement. This was, briefly stated, to find plays with

"N." has since achieved great success on the music-halls and in pantomime. "D." is a leading lady!

This letter to my sister Floss is characteristic of his "Wonderland" style when writing to children:

My Dear FLORENCE,—

Ever since that heartless piece of conduct of yours (I allude to the affair of the Moon and the blue silk gown) I have regarded you with a gloomy interest, rather than with any of the affection of former years—so that the above epithet "dear" must be taken as conventional only, or perhaps may be more fully taken in the sense in which we talk of a "dear" bargain, meaning to imply how much it has cost us; and who shall say how many sleepless nights it has cost me to endeavour to unravel (a most appropriate verb) that "blue silk gown"?

Will you please explain to Tom about that photograph of the family group which I promised him? Its history is an instructive one, as illustrating my habits of care and deliberation. In 1867 the picture was promised him, and an entry made in my book. In 1869, or thereabouts, I mounted the picture on a large card, and packed it in brown paper. In 1870, or 1871, or thereabouts, I took it with me to Guilford, that it might be handy to take with me when I went up to town. Since then I have taken it two or three times to London, and on each occasion (having forgotten to deliver it to him) I brought it back again. This was because I had no convenient place in London to leave it in. But *now* I have found such a place. Mr Dubourg has kindly taken charge of it—so that it is now much nearer to its future owner than it has been for seven years. I quite hope, in the course of another year or two, to be able to remember to bring it to your house: or perhaps Mr Dubourg may be calling even sooner than that and take it with him. You will wonder why I ask you to tell him instead of writing myself. The obvious reason is that you will be able, from sympathy, to put my delay in the most favourable light—to make him see that, as hasty puddings are not the best of puddings, so hasty judgments are not the best of judgments, and that he ought to be content to wait even another seven years for his picture, and to sit "like patience on a monument, smiling at grief." This quotation, by the way, is altogether a misprint. Let me explain it to you. The passage originally stood, "*They sit like patients on the Monument, smiling at Greenh.*" In the next edition "*Greenwich*" was printed short, "*Green*," and so got gradually altered into "*grief*." The allusion of course is to the celebrated Dr Jenner, who used to send all his patients to sit on top of the Monument (near London Bridge) to inhale fresh air, promising them that, when they were well enough, they should go to "*Greenwich Fair*." So of course they always looked out towards Greenwich, and sat smiling to think of the treat in store for them. A play was written on the subject of their inhaling the fresh air, and it was for some time attributed to Shakespeare, but it is certainly not in his style. It was called "*The Wandering Air*," and was lately revived at the Queen's

time, but stands rather higher in the esteem of connoisseurs now than it did in 1906. Ellen Terry's high opinion of it in 1888, expressed long before its merits had been proclaimed, has been abundantly vindicated.

3. *Lady Macbeth's Dress*. Graham Robertson recalls that Oscar Wilde remarked apropos of the dress immortalised in Sargent's picture: "Judging from the banquet, Lady Macbeth seems an economical housekeeper, and evidently patronises local industries for her husband's clothes and the servants' liveries; but she takes care to do all her own shopping in Byzantium."

4. *The Sargent Sketches*. The oil sketch in black and white Sargent made after her death, and is now in the National Portrait Gallery. The coloured sketch is still in the possession of Edith Craig, who has lent it to the Ellen Terry Memorial Museum at Smalldyke.

5. *Irving's Wolsey Dress*. Ellen Terry was mistaken in thinking that the silk for this dress was dyed in Rome. It was woven and dyed in her own birth-place of Coventry. "This is one of the wrong little things that must be made right little things when the book is reprinted" she wrote on the margin of the first edition.

6. *Alfred Gilbert*. This gifted sculptor returned from his exile in Bruges, not long after Ellen Terry's death, to work in London on a memorial monument to Queen Alexandra, which was opened in June 1932. His breach with the Royal Academy has been healed, and he is, once more R. A. He was knighted after the opening of the Memorial. Frampton's prophecy about Gilbert's *Eros* has been partly fulfilled. Piccadilly Circus has been rebuilt, and if the motive was not to provide "a finer setting for Gilbert's jewel," the jewel certainly shines more bright in the new Circus than in the old.

7. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter XII were: Lady Macbeth ("Macbeth," 1887); Catharine Duval ("The Dead Heart," 1889); Lucy Ashton ("Ravenswood," 1890); Nance Oldfield ("Nance Oldfield," 1891); Katharine ("Henry VIII," 1891).

Theatre. The custom of sitting on the Monument was given up when Dr Jenner went mad, and insisted on it that the air was worse up there and that the *lower* you went the *more airy* it became. Hence he always called those little yards, below the pavement, outside the kitchen windows, "*the kitchen airier*," a name that is still in use.

All this information you are most welcome to use, the next time you are in want of something to talk about. You may say you learned it from "a distinguished etymologist," which is perfectly true, since any one who knows me by sight can easily distinguish me from all other etymologists.

What parts are you and Polly now playing?

Believe me to be (conventionally)

Yours affectionately,

L. DODGSON.

This Dodgson digression has led me far from Portia and the Casket Scene, and I want to return to them for a moment. In that "Blackwood's" article, which I still think was unfair as well as unkind, I was blamed for showing too plainly that Portia loves Bassanio before he has actually won her, yet I had Shakespeare's warrant for this "business." He makes Portia say *before* Bassanio chooses the right casket:

One half of me is yours—the other half yours—*All yours!*

Surely this suggests that she is not concealing her passion like a Victorian prude and that Bassanio had most surely won her love, though not yet the right to be her husband.

Dr Furnivall, a great Shakespearean scholar, was so kind as to write me the following letter about Portia:

Being founder and director of the New Shakespeare Society, I venture to thank you most heartily for your most charming and admirable impersonation of our poet's Portia, which I witnessed tonight with a real delight. You have given me a new light on the character, and by your so pretty by-play in the Casket Scene have made bright in my memory for ever the spot which almost all critics have felt dull, and I hope to say this in a new edition of "Shakespeare."

(He did say it, in "The Leopold" edition.)

Again those touches of the wife's love in the advocate when Bassanio says he'd give up his wife for Antonio, and when you kissed your hand to him behind his back in the Ring bit—how pretty and natural they were! Your whole conception and acting of the character are so true to Shakespeare's lines that one longs he could be here to see you. A lady gracious and graceful, handsome, witty, loving and wise, you are his Portia to the life.

That's the best of Shakespeare, I say. His characters can be interpreted in at least eight different ways, and of each way some one will say: "That

"What do you mean?" asked the astonished actor.

My daughter told him that Henry had dropped the curtain on a stage full of noise, and light, and revelry. When it went up again the stage was empty, desolate, with no light but a pale moon, and all sounds of life at a great distance—and then over the bridge came the weary figure of the Jew. This marked the passing of the time between Jessica's elopement and Shylock's return home. It created an atmosphere of silence, and the middle of the night.

"You came back without dropping the curtain," said my daughter, "and so it wasn't a bit the same."

"I couldn't risk dropping the curtain for the business," answered the actor, "*because it needed applause to take it up again!*"

Henry Irving never grew tired of a part, never ceased to work at it, just as he never gave up the fight against his limitations. His diction, as the years went on, grew far clearer when he was depicting rage and passion. His dragging leg dragged no more. To this heroic perseverance he added an almost childlike eagerness in heeding any suggestion for the improvement of his interpretations which commended itself to his imagination and his judgment. From a blind man came the most illuminating criticism of his Shylock. The sensitive ear of the sightless hearer detected a fault in Henry Irving's method of delivering the opening line of his part:

"Three thousand ducats—well!"

"I hear no sound of the usurer in that," the blind man said at the end of the performance. "It is said with the reflective air of a man to whom money means very little."

The justice of the criticism appealed strongly to Henry. He revised his reading not only of the first line, but of many other lines in which he saw now that he had not been enough of the money-lender.

In more recent years he made one change in his dress. He asked my daughter—whose cleverness in such things he fully recognised—to put some stage jewels on to the scarf that he wore round his head when he supped with the Christians.

"I have an idea that, when he went to that supper, he'd like to flaunt his wealth in the Christian dogs' faces. It will look well, too—'like the toad, ugly and venomous,' wearing precious jewels on his head!"

The scarf, witnessing to that untiring love of throwing new light on his impersonations which distinguished Henry to the last, is now in my daughter's possession. She values no relic of him more unless it be the wreath of oak-leaves that she made him for "Coriolanus."

Atlantic took my place as hostess (I was at the theatre as usual); and I took great pains to have everything looking nice! I spent a long time putting out my best blue china, and ordered a splendid dinner, quite forgetting the honoured guest generally dined off a Plasmon biscuit and a bean!

Mr Shaw read "Arms and the Man" to my young American friend (Miss Satty Fairchild) without even going into the dining-room where the blue china was spread out to delight his eye. My daughter Edy was present at the reading, and appeared so much absorbed in some embroidery, and paid the author so few compliments about his play, that he expressed the opinion afterwards that she behaved as if she had been married to him for twenty years!

§ 2

ON Whit Monday, 1902, I received a telegram from Mr Tree saying that he was coming down to Winchelsea to see me on "an important matter of business." I was at the time suffering from considerable depression about the future.

At Stratford-on-Avon a few weeks earlier I had played Queen Katharine with Mr Benson's company during the Shakespeare Birthday Festival, and that had inspired me with a feeling that there was life in this old 'un yet, that she need not retire from the stage because she was being forced into retirement from the Lyceum. Henry had just revived "Faust," a wise move, as it had been one of his biggest money-makers, and had engaged Cissy Loftus for Margaret. It was out of the question for me to play the part. There are some young parts that an actress can play when she is no longer young. Beatrice and Portia, and many others, come to mind. But there are some impossible for her. The part of a young girl, from whose childlike innocence the poignancy of the dramatic situation when she is betrayed arises, is one of these. No amount of skill on the part of the actress can make up for the loss of youth. It was suggested to me (not by Henry) that as I was too old for Margaret, I might play Martha! Well! I didn't quite see *that*! So I kept a promise made in jest to Frank Benson at the Lyceum twenty years earlier, and went off to Stratford.

Mr Benson was wonderful to work with. "I am proud to think," he wrote me just before our few rehearsals of "Henry VIII" began, "that I have trained my folk (as I was taught by my elders and betters at the Lyceum) to be pretty quick at adapting themselves to anything that may be required of them, so that you need not be uneasy as to their not fitting in with your business."

"The Merchant of Venice" was acted two hundred and fifty consecutive nights on the occasion of the first production. On the hundredth night every member of the audience was presented with Henry Irving's acting-edition of the play bound in white vellum—a solid and permanent souvenir, paper, print and binding all being of the best. The famous Chiswick Press did all his work of this kind. On the title page was printed:

I count myself in nothing else so happy

As in a soul remembering my good friends.

At the close of the performance which took place on Saturday, February 14, 1880, Henry entertained a party of 350 to supper on the stage. This was the first of those enormous gatherings which afterwards became an institution at the Lyceum.

It was at this supper that Lord Houghton surprised us all by making a very sarcastic speech about the stage and actors generally. It was no doubt more interesting than the "butter" which is usually applied to the profession at such functions, but every one felt that it was rather rude to abuse long runs when the company were met to celebrate a hundredth performance!

Henry Irving's answer was delightful. He spoke with good sense, good humour and good breeding, and it was all spontaneous. I wish that a phonograph had been in existence that night, and that a record had been taken of the speech. It would be so good for the people who have asserted that Henry Irving always employed journalists (when he could not get Poets Laureate!) to write his speeches for him! The voice was always the voice of Irving, if the hands were sometimes the hands of the professional writer. When Henry was thrown on his debating resources he really spoke better than when he prepared a speech, and his letters prove, if proof were needed, how finely he could write! Those who represent him as dependent in such matters on the help of literary hacks are just ignorant of the facts.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. *Longridge Road*. Although Ellen Terry received a good salary at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and a better one at the Court, she appears to have been hard up for some time after leaving her home in Taverton Street. She writes in Chapter VI of living in lodgings at Camden Town and going to the Prince of Wales's by "bus. There is evidence she had borrowed money in the rainy days, and when the fine ones came she lived carefully, cheaply, and humbly, still feeling the pinch of poverty, until she had paid her debts. From

theatre was despatched to my daughter who at the time had a theatrical costumier's "atelier" in Covent Garden to ask her what could be done. "Miss Terry will, I suppose, have to wear one of our dresses tonight. Perhaps you could replace hers by the end of the week?" "Oh, don't worry," said Edy, bluffing. "I'll make her another dress by tonight." She has since told me that she did not really think it possible, but meant to have a try.

All hands in her workshop were put on the job, and every one who drifted in during the day was pressed into the service. The new dress, begun at 10.30 a.m. was in my dressing room at His Majesty's by 7 p.m. And, more wonderful still, it was better than the dress that had been burned! It stood the wear and tear of the long first run, and of all the revivals, and is now as fresh and pink and merry as ever!

It was an admirable all-round cast—almost a "star" cast: Oscar Asche as Ford, Henry Kemble (since dead) as Dr Caius, Courtice Pounds as Sir Hugh Evans, and Mrs Tree as sweet Anne Page all rowed in the boat with precisely the right swing. There were no "passengers" in the cast. The audience at first used to seem rather amazed! This thwacking rough-and-tumble, Rabelaisian horse-play, Shakespeare! Impossible! But as the evening went on we used to capture even the most sophisticated and force them to return to a simple Elizabethan frame of mind.

In my later career I think I have had no success equal to this! Letters rained on me, yes, even love-letters, as if, to quote Mrs Page, I were still in "the holiday-time of my beauty." As I would always rather make people laugh than see them weep, it may be guessed how much I enjoyed the hearty laughter at His Majesty's during the run of "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

All the time I was at His Majesty's I continued to play in matinees of "Charles I" and "The Merchant of Venice" at the Lyceum with Henry Irving. We went on negotiating, too, about the possibility of my appearing in "Dante," which Sardou had written specially for Henry, and on which he was relying for his next tour in America.

On the 19th of July, 1902, I acted at the Lyceum for the very last time, although I did not know it then. These last Lyceum days were very sad. The reception given by Henry to the Indian Princes, who were in England for the Coronation, was the last flash of the splendid hospitality which had for so many years been one of the glories of the theatre.

During my provincial tour with Henry in the autumn of this year, I thought long and anxiously over the proposition that I should play in "Dante." I heard the play read, and saw no possible part for me in it.

lodgings at Camden Town she moved to lodgings in Finborough Road, Earl's Court. Later she took a house in Longridge Road, also in Earl's Court, which was not all bricks and mortar in those days. Market gardens still survived.

The number of Ellen Terry's house was 33. At 36, opposite, there lived with his family a young man who had just entered University College. He was not one of those who have eyes, and see not. He was indeed abnormally observant. The morning after the new tenants of 33 had moved in, he caught "the flicker of an elbow in the bay-window of the dining-room," and writing of the vision nearly fifty years afterwards says that "even so little of the owner was fascinating." She went this way and that, handling a broom. One way brought her nearer the window. More than the elbow now to see! "A dazzling shape." The young man, enraptured, called his sisters, and they too gazed.

"All ignorant as we were of the theatre and its stars, we had no guess at her identity, and she was dubbed 'The Greek Lady' till we learned that she was Ellen Terry, then appearing at The Court Theatre." D. S. MacColl, from whose "Batch of Memories" I have been allowed to quote this, gives a charming impression, the kind of impression we get only from painters, of a daily event in Longridge Road at this time:

"... Each morning when the Greek Lady went off to rehearsal, there was a scene as pretty as anything she played upon the stage. She appeared upon the steps like April morning, lifting wide eloquent lips, hooded eyes and breathless face to the light. She raised and kissed two little tots who were to be known as Edith and Gordon Craig. She greeted the next-door neighbours, family of a Rabbinical scholar, who had promptly become slaves of her apparition, and stood ready on the pavement. Her cushions were brought out, placed and patted in the open carriage; herself installed; the air became tender and gay with wavings and blown kisses; the wheels revolved, and greyness descended once more on Longridge Road."

The MacColl family felt that with this "Phantom of Delight," the figure of that "manly bulldog sort of man," Charles Kelly, did not fit in. "We resented the conjunction for her as a false concord." When a year had passed, that too substantial figure disappeared, and a new figure was seen in Longridge Road, "spare, and grim-jaunty in close-fitting short jacket, and tilted wide-a-wake; Henry Irving."

Other memorable figures could be seen in Longridge Road at this time. After Ellen Terry, shedding brightness on the air, had driven off to rehearsal, one could see an invalid emerge from another of those sad-coloured brick houses, to make one of his last excursions in a bath-chair. This was Charles Mackay, author of "Cheer Boys, Cheer." In his wake would sometimes trip a couple, bright as enamel in face and dress against the drab portico. They were Marie Corelli and her half-brother, Eric Mackay. From another doorway would sweep out a stalwart figure, all ulster, "deer-stalker," and beard: George MacDonald. Longridge Road was dull only in colour in the early 'eighties.

2. *Henry Irving.* The many references to Irving as man, actor, and man-

him in exploiting his ideas in London? Ideas he had in plenty. "Unpractical" ideas people called them; but what else should *ideas* be?

At the Imperial Theatre, where I made my first venture into management in April, 1903, I gave my son a free hand. I hope it will be remembered, when I am spoken of by young critics after my death as a "Victorian" actress, an actress belonging to the "old school," that I produced a spectacular play of Ibsen's in a manner which possibly anticipated the scenic ideas of the future by a century.

Naturally I am not inclined to criticise my son's methods. I think there is a great deal to be said for the views that he has expressed in his book on "The Art of the Theatre," and when I worked with him I found him far from unpractical. It was the modern theatre which was unpractical when he was in it! It was wrongly designed, wrongly built. We had to disembowel the Imperial behind scenes before he could even make a start, and then the great height of the proscenium made his lighting lose all its value. He always considered the pictorial side of the scene before its dramatic significance, arguing that this significance lay in the picture and in movement, the drama having originated not with the poet but with the dancer.

When his idea of dramatic significance clashed with Ibsen's, strange things would happen.

Mr Bernard Shaw, though impressed by my son's work and the beauty that he brought on to the stage of the Imperial, wrote to me that the atmosphere of the first act according to Ibsen should be dawn, youth rising with the morning sun, reconciliation, rich gifts, brightness, lightness, pleasant feelings, peace. On to this sunlit scene stalks Hjordis, a figure symbolic of gloom, revenge, eternal feud, of relentless hatred and uncompromising forgetfulness of wrong. At the Imperial, said Mr Shaw, the curtain rose on profound gloom. When you *could* see anything you saw old and severity—old men with white hair substituted for the gallant young sons of Ornu!—everywhere murky cliffs and shadowy spears, melancholy, and—darkness!

Into this symbolic night enter, in a blaze of limelight, a fair figure robed in complete fluffy white fur, a gay and bright Hjordis with a timid manner and a hesitating utterance.

For the last items in this list of incongruities my son was not responsible. They were my fault!

His beautiful production was received with such enthusiasm on the first night that I was sanguine of a success. But people did not come to the Imperial in sufficient numbers to make it possible for me to keep it on long. The running expenses were a terrible drain on my purse. "Much Vikings" had to be withdrawn before our second production, "Much

correction of Ellen Terry's mistake had been made in a far from amiable courteous reference to Mr Ball, as he was a peppery little man, and his our music for Faust." There was possibly an intentional touch of irony in this forgive me for having forgotten for the moment that it was he who wrote he (Mr Ball) is one of the most amiable of created men, I know he will O'Connor) to point out the slip, and Ellen Terry sent a letter of apology: "As this chapter appeared in "M. A. P.," Mr Ball wrote to the Editor (the late T.P. posed by Meredith Ball, Hamilton Clarke's successor at the Lyceum. When incidental music for "Faust," including that for the "Broken" scene, was com-

5. *The Broken Music in "Faust."* Ellen Terry made a slip here. The as Ophelia. It bears the inscription: "To the Divine Ophelia of Drury Lane." One of the best of Gordon Craig's early woodcuts represents Ellen Terry "just damnable" conflicts with her son's impression that she was marvellous. when she played Ophelia at Drury Lane for the last time in 1896 she was

4. *Ellen Terry's last appearance as Ophelia.* Ellen Terry's opinion that take! But there is always work!" when hopes goes. I have always felt people were worth it. Perhaps 'my mis- matters, in big matters. I must hope to the end. That will be my end— suppose I could dream again, but I could never give up hoping—in little "I love to work, and I love to dream. I had my dream night off. Foolish to

recently in one of her notebooks:
More light is thrown on her attitude to her work by this confession found

lasted for over twenty years.
partnerships were of short duration, her artistic partnership with Irving she left its management to others. It is significant that while her domestic imagined she was a good housewife, yet her home was best ordered when home nursing her energy for rehearsals and performances in the theatre. She she was a home-loving person, yet she spent the greater part of her time at life. For its sake she "scorned delights and lived laborious days." She imagined of her "art," but of her "work" was always the most important thing in her a brief period in her youth, her work (like Eleanora Duse, she never spoke whom Ellen Terry herself believed, with the Ellen Terry of fact. Except for human being. It is impossible to identify this theoretical Ellen Terry, in would have been quite ready at any time to sacrifice it to her life as a that she was not devoted heart and soul to her vocation as an actress, and correspondents, Bernard Shaw, have both helped to fix it in people's minds) who knew her well (her son Gordon Craig and one of her most famous and the passage in which it occurs confirms the impression given by many 3. *More Woman than Arist.* Ellen Terry honestly thought this was true, chapter covering that period.

Irving-Terry partnership was finally broken, it has been appended to the of the Lyceum, and describes the situation in 1903 when the long and famous Terry at various dates, but as it deals mainly with Irving in the last days Chapter XIII. This gives a more complete study of him, compiled by Ellen

ager, in the pages of Ellen Terry's book are amplified in the appendix to

made records later when the device of reproducing them from the matrix had been invented, but they are all unsatisfactory, even when judged by the standard of the time, and give no idea of the quality of her voice.

9. *Ellen Terry's Portia*. There is a vast amount of evidence of the long and profound study Ellen Terry gave to her parts. She continued to give it, long after they had become old parts. I have found a cutting from an Italian essay on "The Merchant of Venice," dated 1903, with comments in her writing which shows she was still interested in anything which threw new light on the play. The writer of the article made the ingenious suggestion that the song in the Casket Scene: "Tell me where is fancy bred" had been deliberately selected by Portia in order to guide Bassanio to the choice of the right casket. "I like this idea," writes Ellen Terry. "And why shouldn't Portia sing the song herself? She could make the four rhymes, 'bred, head, nourished, fed,' set the word 'lead' ringing in Bassanio's ears. A woman of Portia's sort couldn't possibly remain passive in such a crisis in her life."

10. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter VII were: Ophelia ("Hamlet," 1878); Lady Anne ("Richard III," Act I, 1879); Ruth Meadowes ("Eugene Aram," 1879); Henrietta Maria ("Charles I," 1879); Frou-Frou ("Buenafly," 1879); Iolanthe ("Iolanthe," 1880); Bearice ("Much Ado About Nothing," at Leeds, 1880).

ing slightly. "Let me see.... Well, a good cigar, a good glass of wine—good friends." Here he kissed my hand with courtesy. Always he was so courteous; always his actions, like this little one of kissing my hand, were so beautifully timed. They came just before the spoken words, and gave them peculiar value.

"That's not a bad summing-up of it all," I said. "And the end.... How would you like that to come?"

"How would I like that to come?" He repeated my question lightly, yet meditatively too. Then he was silent for some thirty seconds before he snapped his fingers—the action again before the words.

"Like that!"

I thought of the definition of inspiration—"A calculation rapidly made." Perhaps he had never thought of the manner of his death before. Now he had an inspiration as to how it would come.

We were silent a long time. I thought how like some splendid Doge of Venice he looked, sitting up in bed, his beautiful mobile hand stroking his chin.

I agreed, when I could speak, that to be snuffed out like a candle would save a lot of trouble.

After Henry Irving's sudden death in October of the same year, some of his friends protested against the statement that it was the kind of death that he desired—that they knew, on the contrary, that he thought sudden death inexpressibly sad.

I can only say what he told me.

I stayed with him about three hours at Wolverhampton. Before I left, I went back to see the doctor again—a very nice man by the way, and clever.

He told me that Henry ought never to play "The Bells" again, even if he acted again, which he said ought not to be.

It was clever of the doctor to see what a terrible emotional strain "The Bells" put upon Henry—how he never could play Mathias with ease as he could Louis XI, for example.

Every time he heard the sound of the bells, the throbbing of his heart must have nearly killed him. He used always to turn quite white—there was no trick about it. It was imagination acting physically on the body.

His death as Mathias—the death of a strong, robust man—was different from all his other stage deaths. He did really almost die—he imagined death with such horrible intensity. His eyes would disappear upwards, his face grow grey, his limbs cold.

No wonder, then, that the first time that the Wolverhampton doctor's warning was disregarded, and Henry played "The Bells" at Bradford, his

CHAPTER VIII
THE LYCEUM IN THE 'EIGHTIES
(1880-1883)

§ I

THE play with which the Lyceum reopened in the autumn of 1880 was "The Corsican Brothers." Henry Irving had not played the dual rôle of Louis and Fabien del Franchi before, and he had to compete with old playgoers' memories of Charles Kean and Fechter. Wisely enough he made of it a "period" play, emphasising its old-fashioned atmosphere. In 1891, when the play was revived, the D'Orsay costumes were noticed, and considered piquant and charming. In 1880 I am afraid they were regarded with indifference as merely antiquated.

The grace and elegance of Henry as the sophisticated brother I shall never forget. There was something in *him* to which the manners and custom, the whole florid style of the D'Orsay period appealed, and he spoke the stilted language with as much ease as he wore the cravat and the tight-waisted full-breasted coat. Such a line as,

'Tis she! Her footstep beats upon my heart!

were not absurd from his lips.

The sincerity of the period, he felt, lay in its elegance. A rough movement, a too undeliberate speech, and the absurdity of the thing might be given away. It was in fact given away by Terriss as Château-Renaud, who was not the smooth, graceful, courteous villain that Alfred Wigan had been and that Henry wanted. He told me that he paid Miss Fowler, an actress who in other respects was not very remarkable, an enormous salary because she could look the high-bred lady of elegant manners.

It was in "The Corsican Brothers" that tableau curtains were first used at the Lyceum. They were made of red plush, which suited the old decoration of the theatre. Those who only saw the Lyceum after its renovation in 1881 do not realize perhaps that before that date it was decorated in dull gold and dark crimson, and had funny boxes with high fronts like old-fashioned church pews. One of these boxes was rented annually by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. It was rather like the toy card-

it in the Church Scene that he designed for my production of "Much Ado About Nothing" in 1903.

A great deal of the effect was due to the lighting. The gigantic figure of the many-breasted Artemis, placed far back in the scene-dock, loomed through a blue mist, while the foreground of the picture was in yellow light. The thrilling effect always to be gained on the stage by the simple expedient of a great number of people doing the same thing in the same way at the same moment, was seen in "The Cup," when the stage was filled with a crowd of women who raised their arms about their heads with a large, rhythmic, sweeping movement and then bowed to the goddess with the regularity of a regiment saluting.

At rehearsals there was one girl who did this movement with peculiar grace. She always wore a black velveteen dress and I called her "Hamlet." I used to chaff her about wearing such a grand dress at rehearsals, but she was never to be seen in any other. The girls at the theatre told me that she was very poor, and that underneath her black velveteen dress, which she wore summer and winter, she had nothing but a pair of stockings and a chemise. Not long after the first night of "The Cup" she disappeared. I made inquiries about her, and found that she was dying in hospital. I went several times to see her. She looked so beautiful in the little white bed. Her great eyes, black, with weary white lids, used to follow me as I left the hospital ward, and I could not always tear myself away from their dumb beseechingness, but would turn back and sit down again by the bed. Once she asked me if I would leave something belonging to me that she might look at until I came again. I took off the amber and coral beads that I was wearing at the time and gave them to her. Two days later I had a letter from the nurse telling me that poor "Hamlet" was dead—that just before she died, with closed eyes, and gasping for breath, she sent her love to her "dear Miss Terry," and wanted me to know that the tall lilies I had brought her on my last visit were to be buried with her, but that she had wiped the coral and amber beads and put them in cotton-wool, to be returned to me when she was dead. Poor "Hamlet"!

Quite as wonderful as the Temple Scene was the setting of the first act, which represented the rocky side of a mountain with a glimpse of a fertile table-land and a pergola with vines growing over it at the top. The acting in this scene all took place on different levels. The hunt swept past on one level; the entrance to the temple was on another. A goatherd played upon a pipe. Scenically speaking, it was not Greece, but Greece in Sicily, Capri, or some such hilly region.

Henry Irving was not able to look like the full-lipped, f

doubt be drawn from the rather surprising fact that although Ellen Terry had over a hundred letters from Shaw in her possession in 1906, she published only one in her memoirs. I have already stated in the editorial note preceding this letter in "Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw: A Correspondence," published in 1931, that when we were working together on her book, I urged her, after she had told me she had heaps of other letters from Shaw, to select some for inclusion, and submit them to him for the necessary permission, and that she put me off with the plea that she could not find them. I have no doubt this was true. She often could not find things she cherished, not because she had carelessly mislaid them, but because she had carefully put them away in some "safe place," the whereabouts of which she had forgotten. But she gave me the impression that she did not want to find these letters. After one rather cursory search, she said her inability to find them didn't matter, as there were "things in them about Henry which ought not to be published so soon after his death." She may have had other objections to their being published at that time, or at any time while she was alive, but I am convinced she foresaw the possibility of their being published in a remote future, and was not horrified at the possibility. The chief reason for this conviction is that she destroyed all letters of a very intimate nature. Of the thousands of love-letters she must have received, very few were found in her archives after her death, and these few seem to have been kept for a definite purpose. She was not one of those people who are averse to all thought of what will happen after they are dead, and would, I believe, have made careful provision for the destruction by her executors of those letters, diaries and note-books which she had refrained from destroying herself, if she had been anxious that they should not survive her. It is a reasonable conjecture that she knew their value, and foresaw their future interest.

The account given in this chapter of the origin of the correspondence with Bernard Shaw is in all essentials accurate. There are slips in details, which have already been corrected in the first editorial note in "Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw: A Correspondence." Ellen Terry's first letter about her "composer-singer friend" was addressed not to Shaw, but to Edmund Yates, and Shaw was writing musical criticism for Yates's weekly "The World" at the time, not for "The Saturday Review." The brevity of Ellen Terry's allusion to a correspondence, now famous, is quite natural when one considers that it was made at a period when Shaw was not, although she was playing in "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," of great importance in her life. The time when they wrote to one another every day was over. As correspondents, who never met, they were on terms of much greater intimacy than as author and actress, who met every day at rehearsals. It is possible that this might not have been so, if during these rehearsals Ellen Terry had been fancy-free. But she was in the toils of one of those strange infatuations which seem to us stranger when women of strong character and great talent are their victims. A young American actor in the cast of "Brassbound" had the embarrassing privilege of putting Bernard Shaw's nose out of joint. The reader who is surprised at the insignificant place occupied by Shaw in Ellen Terry's memoirs should remember

some one in the audience sneezed. Every one burst out laughing, and I had to laugh too. I did not even attempt the next line. "The Cup" was called a failure, yet it ran 125 nights, and every night the house was crowded! On the hundredth night I sent Tennyson the Cup itself. I had it made in silver from Mr Godwin's design—a three-handled cup, pippin-shaped, standing on three legs.

Moon, bring him home, bring him home,
Safe from the dark and the cold,

The music of "The Cup" was not up to the level of the rest. Lady Winchilsea's setting of "Moon on the field and the foam," written within the compass of eight notes, for my poor singing voice, which will not go up high nor down low, was effective enough, but the music as a whole was too "charity" for a severe tragedy. One night when I was singing my very best:

I quite agree with you as to H. I.'s Synorix.

HALLAM TENNYSON.

Yours ever sincerely,

With all our best wishes.

DEAR CAMILLA, he answered, I have given your messages to my father, but believe me, who am not 'common report,' that he will thoroughly appreciate your noble, *most* beautiful and imaginative rendering of 'Camma.' My father and myself hope to see you soon, but not while this detestable cold weather lasts. We trust that you are not now really the worse for that night of nights.

I wrote to Tennyson's son Hallam, after the first night, that I knew his father would be delighted with Henry's splendid performance, but was afraid he would be disappointed in me.

The first act was well within my means; the second was beyond them, but it was very good for me to try and do it. I had a long apostrophe to the goddess with my back turned to the audience, and I never tackled anything more difficult. My dresses, designed by Mr Godwin, one of them with the toga made of that wonderful material which Arnott had printed, were simple, fine and free.

With a pale, pale face, bright red hair, gold armour and a tiger-skin, a diabolical expression and very thin crimson lips, Henry looked handsome and sickening at the same time. *Lechery* was written across his forehead. How he failed to delight in it as a picture I can't conceive. as Synorix! Tennyson was not pleased with him ally with barbarian cruelty and lust. Tennyson was not pleased with him so he conceived his own type of the blend of Roman intellect and sensu- Romans such as we see in long lines in marble at the British Museum,

"No," I used to answer, "but it isn't a song. It's a look here, a gesture there, a laugh anywhere, and Henry Irving's face everywhere!"

Miss Winifred Emery came to us for "The Belle's Stratagem" and played the part that I had played years before at the Haymarket. She was bewitching, and in her white wig in the ball-room, beautiful as well. She knew how to bear herself on the stage instinctively, and could dance a minuet to perfection. The daughter of Sam Emery, a great comedian in a day of great comedians, and the granddaughter of the Emery, it was not surprising that she should show aptitude for the stage.

Mr Howe was another new arrival in the Lyceum company. He was at his funniest as Mr Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem." It was not the first time that he had played my father in a piece (we had acted father and daughter in "The Little Treasure"), and I always called him "Daddy." The dear old man was much liked by every one. He had a tremendous pair of legs, was bluff and bustling in manner, though courtly too, and cared more about gardening than acting. He had a little farm at Isleworth and because of this and of his stout gaitered legs, Henry called him "the agricultural actor." He was a good old port and whiskey drinker, but he could carry his liquor like a Regency man.

He was a walking history of the stage. "Yes, my dear," he used to say to me, "I was in the original cast of the first performance of 'The Lady of Lyons,' which Lord Lytton gave Macready as a present, and I was the original François when 'Richelieu' was produced. Lord Lytton wrote this part for a lady, but at rehearsal it was found that there was a good deal of movement awkward for a lady to do, so I was put into it."

"What year was it, Daddy?"

"God bless me, I must think.... It must have been about a year after Her Majesty took the throne."

For forty years and nine months Daddy Howe had acted at the Haymarket Theatre! When he was first there, the theatre was lighted with oil lamps, and when a lamp smoked or went out, one of the servants of the theatre came on and lighted it up again during the action of the play.

Of Henry Irving as an actor Howe once said to me that at first he was prejudiced against him because he was so different from the other great actors that he had known.

"This isn't a bit like Iago," I said to myself when I first saw him in 'Othello.' That was at the end of the first act. But he had commanded my attention to his innovations. In the second act I found myself deeply interested in watching and studying the development of his conception. In the third act I was fascinated by his originality. By the end of the

play I wondered that I could ever have thought that the part ought to be played differently."

Daddy Howe was the first member of the Lyceum company who got a reception from the audience on his entrance as a public favourite. He remained with us until his death, which took place on our fourth American tour in 1893.

§ 3

EVERY one has commended Henry Irving's kindly courtesy in inviting Edwin Booth to come and play with him at the Lyceum Theatre. Booth was having a wretched season at the Princess's, which was, when he went there, a theatre on the down-grade, and under a thoroughly commercial management. The great American actor, through much domestic trouble and bereavement, had more or less "given up" things. At any rate he had not the spirit which can combat such treatment as he received at the Princess's, where the pieces in which he appeared were "thrown" on to the stage with every mark of assumption that he was not going to be a success.

Yet, although he accepted with gratitude Henry Irving's suggestion that he should migrate from the Princess's to the Lyceum and appear there three times a week as Othello with the Lyceum company and its manager to support him, I cannot be sure that Booth's pride was not more hurt by this magnificent hospitality than it ever could have been by disaster. It is always more difficult to *receive* than to *give*.

Few people thought of this, I suppose. I did, because I could imagine Henry Irving in America in the same situation—accepting the hospitality of Booth. Would not he too have been melancholy, quiet, unassertive, *almost* as uninteresting and uninterested as Booth was?

I saw him first at a benefit performance at Drury Lane. I came to the door of the room where Henry was dressing, and Booth was sitting there with his back to me.

"Here's Miss Terry," said Henry as I came round the door. Booth looked up at me swiftly. I have never in any face, in any country, seen such wonderful eyes. There was a mystery about his appearance and his manner—a sort of pride which seemed to say: "Don't try to know me, for I am not what I have been." He seemed broken, and devoid of ambition.

At rehearsal he was very gentle and apathetic. Accustomed to playing Othello with stock companies, he had few suggestions to make about the stage-management. The part was to him more or less of a monologue.

"I shall never make you black," he said one morning. "When I take

Lycium." (He looked exceedingly silly.) "For the present, you can, of course, do as you like!"

I felt—a good many feelings! At top of all came amusement to save the situation. "Then," said I, "I have in plain terms what Ted would call the dirty kick out?"

"Well—er—for the present I don't see what can be done, and I dare say you—" I cut him short. "Oh, I daresay I shall get along somehow. Have I your permission to shift for myself, and make up a tour for myself?" "Yes." "For how long?" "Well, I can scarcely say." "Until Christmas next?" "Yes." "That was enough. I went up to London next day, and asked Griffiths to make me up a tour. He was delighted, and within a week had signed and sealed for 9 weeks, and pencilled in dates up to next Christmas.

Soon after I left Bournemouth, free to think H. a Donkey, and make my own plans, he wrote me: "Joe Carr will call and propose new plan."

J. Carr *did* call, and told me (January 10) that a Syndicate could be formed to help H. I. out of all his difficulties. They would produce "Robespierre," and I was to make no new plans for my own tour! I said I had already settled for 9 weeks, to begin January 30, but would cancel the other engagements up to Christmas. No thanks from Henry! All taken as a matter of course from me!

No acknowledgement that I had advised the Carr plan at Bournemouth: "You are down for the moment, but the thing to do *directly* you are strong again is to come out bang with a new play at the Lycium." "All very well" (testily and ironically) "but there's no money, and there's no play." I told him he could get the money, and had 3 or 4 plays. I mentioned "Robespierre." "It's only half written." "Then, hurry up Mr. Sardou, and make him finish it!" I said.

H. I.'s arrangement with Syndicate: £11,000 for the remainder of Lycium lease. (£5,000 on mortgage still leaves £6,000 to go on with.) Then another £1,000 for "Robespierre." Every season *both* of us to play at Lycium from April to July. H. I.'s share, 60 per cent. Then tours in America and the Provinces, also on sharing terms.

J. Carr asked me to write a letter to Henry, saying I would stay on at the Lycium and go to America afterwards, as the Syndicate would not sign until they knew I was to be part of the Show! I would not write to H. since he had done the business through J. Carr, but I wrote J. C. a note he could show And so *that* was how it was all settled about the "future plans of Henry Irving."

April, 1899. He is afloat again! "Robespierre" was a grand success last night. It's a bad play, but a wonderfully showy one. Much variety in scene, no development of character. A one-man piece. Henry, and over 250 supers. He acts the 3rd Act splendidly.

May 15, 1899. Henry too ill to act, and Laurence plays his part. L. plays ghost scene better than his father, but none of the rest to compare with H.'s.

May 25, 1899. H. back in "Robespierre." All the company asking my

your hand I shall have a corner of my drapery in my hand. That will protect you."

I am bound to say that I thought of Mr Booth's "protection" with some yearning the next week when I played Desdemona to *Henry's* Othello. Before he had done with me I was nearly as black as he.

Booth was a melancholy, dignified Othello, but not great as Salvini was great. Salvini's Hamlet made me scream with mirth, but his Othello was the grandest, biggest, most glorious thing. We often prate of "reserved force." Salvini had it, for the simple reason that his was the gigantic force which may be restrained because of its immensity. Men have no need to dam up a little purling brook. If they do it in acting, it is tame, absurd and pretentious. But Salvini held himself in, and still his groan was like a tempest, his passion huge.

The fact is that, apart from Salvini's personal genius, the foreign temperament is better fitted to deal with Othello than the English. Shakespeare's French and Italians, Greeks and Latins, medievals and barbarians, fanatics and reals, all have a dash of Elizabethan Englishmen in them, but not Othello.

Booth's Othello was very helpful to my Desdemona. It is difficult to preserve the simple, heroic blindness of Desdemona to the fact that her lord mistrusts her, if her lord is raving and stamping under her nose! Booth was gentle in the scenes with Desdemona until the scene where Othello overwhelms her with the foul word and destroys her faith.

My greatest triumph as Desdemona was not gained with the audience but with Henry Irving! He found my endeavours to accept comfort from Iago so pathetic that they brought the tears to his eyes. It was the oddest sensation when I said "Oh, good Iago, what shall I do to win my lord again?" to look up—my own eyes dry, for Desdemona is past crying then—and see Henry's eyes at their biggest, and most luminous, soft and full of tears! He was, in spite of Iago and in spite of his power of identifying himself with the part, very deeply moved by my acting. But he knew how to turn it to his purpose: he obtrusively took the tears with his fingers and blew his nose with much feeling, softly and long (so much expression there is, by the way, in blowing the nose on the stage), so that the audience might think his emotion a fresh stroke of hypocrisy.

Every one liked Henry's Iago. For the first time in his life he knew what it was to win unanimous praise. Nothing could be better, I think, than Mr Walkley's¹ description: "Daringly Italian, a true comparator of the Borgias, or rather, better than Italians, that devil incarnate, an Englishman Italianate."

One adored him, devil though he was. He was so full of charm, so

ferent doctors, and followed the different advice of each! He is singularly simple, or singularly stupid in the matter of his health. I think the latter!

June, 1900. Back in London. "Olivia," Too bad! Every one, but H., is about half my age. I'm angry at having to do it, but patience!

October, 1900. A wonderfully successful tour. "Olivia" is a tremendous attraction in the provinces. H. is very ill, and is ordered to give up the tour in the spring, and also the Lyceum season. . . . He has terrified me once or twice by his exhaustion and feebleness. Then he appears grateful to us all, for we *all* give him *all*. But when he gets a little better, anything so icy, indifferent, and almost contemptuous, I never saw.

We are all to go on tour in February and March without him.

(The note "About H. I." breaks off here. It makes perfectly clear that Ellen Terry loyally continued to serve Henry Irving, against her own interests, until she was finally convinced she could no longer be of use to him. The note has the further interest of having been compiled during the years when Ellen Terry was corresponding with Shaw. He claims in his preface to the published correspondence] that he "destroyed Ellen Terry's belief in Irving." The note hardly confirms this, but it suggests the probability that Shaw gave shape and consciousness to Ellen Terry's disillusionment. She had however never been blind to the fact that there were flaws in the diamond.)

sincerely the "honest" Iago, peculiarly sympathetic with Othello, Desdemona, Roderigo, *all* of them—except his wife. It was only in the soliloquies and in the scenes with his wife that he revealed his devil's nature. Could one ever forget those grapes which he plucked in the first act, and slowly ate, spitting out the seeds, as if each one represented a worthy virtue to be put out of his mouth? His Iago and his Romeo in different ways proved his power to portray *Italian* passions—the passions of lovely, treacherous people, who will either sing you a love sonnet or stab you in the back—you are not sure which!

We played "Othello" for six weeks, three performances a week, to guinea stalls, and could have played it longer. Each week Henry and Booth changed parts. For both of them it was a change *for the worse*.

Booth's Iago seemed deadly commonplace after Henry's. He was always the snake in the grass; he showed the villain in all the scenes. He could not resist the temptation of making ornate effects.

Henry Irving's Othello was condemned almost as universally as his Iago was praised. For once I find myself with the majority. He screamed and ranted and raved—lost his voice, was slow where he should have been swift, incoherent where he should have been strong. I could not bear to see him in the part. It was painful to me. Yet night after night he achieved in the speech to the Senate one of the most superb and beautiful bits of acting of his life. It was *wonderful*. He spoke the speech, beaming on Desdemona all the time. The gallantry of the thing is indescribable.

I think his failure as Othello was one of the unspoken bitternesses of Henry's life. When I say "failure" I am of course judging him by his own standard, and using the word to describe what he was to himself, not what he was to the public. On the last night, he rolled up the clothes that he had worn as the Moor one by one, carefully laying one garment on top of the other, and then, half-humorously and very deliberately said, "*Never again!*" Then he stretched himself with his arms above his head and gave a great sigh of relief.

Mr. Pinero was excellent as Roderigo in this production. He was always good in the "silly ass" type of part and no one could say of him that he was playing himself!

Desdemona is not counted a big part by actresses, but I loved playing it. Some nights I played it beautifully. My appearance was right—I was such a poor wraith of a thing. But let there be no mistake—it took strength to act this weakness and passiveness of Desdemona's. I soon found that, like Cordelia, she has plenty of character.

Reading the play the other day, I studied the opening scene. It is the finest opening to a play I know.

PART II
BIOGRAPHY
BY CHRISTOPHER ST JOHN
(1906-1928)

How many times Shakespeare draws fathers and daughters, and how little stock he seems to take of *mothers*! Portia and Desdemona, Cordelia, Rosalind and Miranda, Lady Macbeth, Queen Katherine and Hermione, Ophelia, Jessica, Hero, and many more are daughters of *fathers*, but of their mothers we hear nothing. My own daughter called my attention to this fact quite recently, and it is really a singular one. Of mothers of sons there are plenty of examples. Constance, Volunna, the Countess Rousillon, Gertrude; but if there are mothers of daughters at all, they are poor examples, like Juliet's mother and Mrs. Page. I wonder if in all the many hundreds of books written on Shakespeare and his plays this point has been taken up? I once wrote a paper on the "Letters in Shakespeare's Plays," and congratulated myself that they had never been made a separate study. The very day after I first read my paper in Glasgow, a lady wrote to me from Oxford and said I was mistaken in thinking that there was no other contribution to the subject. She enclosed an essay of her own which had either been published, or read before some society. Probably some one else has dealt with Shakespeare's patronage of fathers and neglect of mothers! I often wonder what the mothers of Goneril, Regan and Cordelia were like! I think Lear must have married twice.

"Romeo and Juliet" was the first of Henry Irving's great Shakespearean productions. "Hamlet" and "Othello" had been mounted with care, but, in spite of statements that I have seen to the contrary, they were not true reflections of Irving as a producer. In beauty I do not think that "Romeo and Juliet" surpassed "The Cup," but it was very sumptuous, impressive and Italian. It was the most *elaborate* of all the Lyceum productions. In it Henry first displayed his mastery of crowds. The braiding of the rival houses in the streets, the procession of girls to wake Juliet on her wedding morning, the musicians, the magnificent reconciliation of the two houses which closed the play, every one on the stage holding a torch, were all treated with a marvellous sense of pictorial effect. Henry once said to me: "'Hamlet' could be played anywhere on its acting merits. It marches from situation to situation. But 'Romeo and Juliet' proceeds from picture to picture. Every line suggests a picture. It is a dramatic poem rather than a drama, and I mean to treat it from that point of view."

While he was preparing the production, he revived "The Two Roses," a comedy in which as Digby Grant he had made a great success years before. I rehearsed the part of Lottie two or three times, but Henry

CHAPTER I
LAST DAYS IN THE THEATRE
(1906-1914)

§ 1

IN the Ellen Terry Memorial Museum at Smallhythe Place, the unpretentious old timbered farm-house about which there still seems to hang some of the shimmering iridescence that was Ellen Terry, one of the exhibits is an imposing folio, massively bound in oak boards, the top one massively decorated with a bronze shield, the shield massively embossed with the name Ellen Terry, a classical mask, and a romantic star. The interior of the volume is less massive than the exterior; the thousands of newspaper-cuttings pasted on its pages are more flimsy and perishable stuff than oak or bronze. But here, for such time as pulp-paper and printer's ink endure, is an almost complete record of Ellen Terry's Jubilee, drawn from English, American and Continental journals during the year 1906. It was presented to Ellen Terry by Mr Franklyn Thomasson, the managing-director of *The Tribune*, a new daily organ of the Liberal party. The chief event of this newspaper's short life was its inauguration of the Ellen Terry Jubilee Celebration Fund. It was a shilling fund, which enabled the financially poorest of Ellen Terry's admirers to become subscribers. The shillings poured in singly and in thousands, and eventually the fund reached a total of £3,000. It is possible that if the appeal to the nation to show its appreciation of Ellen Terry in this practical way had been made jointly by an united press, not by one journal, whose enterprise was suspect as a scoop, the result would have been more dazzling. The figures of the *Tribune* total, amassed slowly during weeks, were doubled in one day at Drury Lane. The Jubilee Commemoration performance there added nearly £6,000 to Ellen Terry's testimonial.

All this is on record in the oak-bound book, but there is not a word about it in Ellen Terry's autobiography. By the time she came to the Jubilee period, the subject of the last brief chapter, she was no longer Ellen Terry. She was Mrs James Carew, a different person from Ellen Terry, the veteran actress who had just celebrated her stage jubilee. Mrs

released me because I was studying Juliet; and, as he said, "You've got to do all you know with it."

Perhaps the sense of this responsibility weighed on me. Perhaps I was neither young enough nor old enough to play Juliet. I read everything that had ever been written about her before I had myself decided what she was. It was a dreadful mistake. That was the first thing wrong with my Juliet—lack of original impulse.

As for the second and the third and the fourth—well, I am not more than common vain, I trust, but I see no occasion to write them *all* down.

It was perhaps the greatest opportunity that I had yet had at the Lyceum. I studied the part at my cottage at Hampton Court in a bedroom looking out over the park. There was nothing wrong with *that*. By the way, how important it is to be careful about environment and everything else when one is studying. One ought to be in the country, but not all the time.... It is good to go about and see pictures, hear music, and watch everything. One should be very much alone, and should study early and late—all night, if need be, even at the cost of sleep. Everything that one does or thinks or sees will have an effect upon the part, precisely as on an unborn child.

I wish now that instead of reading how this and that actress had played Juliet, and cracking my brain over the different readings of her lines and making myself familiar with the different opinions of philosophers and critics, I had gone to Verona, and just *imagined*. Perhaps the most wonderful description of Juliet, as she should be acted, occurs in Gabriele d'Annunzio's "Il Fuoco." In the book an Italian actress tells her friend how she played the part when she was a girl of fourteen in an open-air theatre near Verona. Could a girl of fourteen play such a part? Yes, if she were not youthful, only young with the youth of the poet, tragically old as some youth is.

Now I understand Juliet better. Now I know how she should be played. But time is inexorable. At sixty, know what one may, one cannot play Juliet.

I know that Henry Irving's production of "Romeo and Juliet" has been attributed to my ambition. What nonsense! Henry Irving now had in view the production of all Shakespeare'sactable plays, and naturally "Romeo and Juliet" would come as early as possible in the programme.

The music was composed by Sir Julius Benedict, and was exactly right. There was no *leit-motiv*, no attempt to reflect the passionate emotion of the drama, but a great deal of Southern gaiety. At a rehearsal which had lasted far into the night I asked Sir Julius, who was very old, if he wasnt sleepy.

more graceful and gentle flights of fancy associated with the drama, we should more securely vindicate our claim to be a civilised people."

Some guests at the banquet who no doubt applauded this remark proceeded to refute our claim to be "a civilised people," or at any rate a highly cultured one, by throwing away the delightful souvenir designed by William Nicholson with which they had been presented. The floor, when the company dispersed, was strewn with copies of a genuine work of art, a long roll depicting Ellen Terry in various parts, from Mamillius to Lady Cecily Waynflete.

There is no reference to this incident in the oak-bound book; it was one of many incidents which did not get into the papers from which Mr Thomasson's history of the jubilee was compiled. The press in 1906 made no comment on the extraordinary fact that not a single woman was invited to join either the General or Executive Committee constituted to organise the Commemoration performance at Drury Lane. One interesting result was that the Executive arranged a programme, as nearly as possible all-male. Actresses, with the exception of those belonging to the Terry family, who had parts in "Much Ado About Nothing," were to be represented on the stage only in Gilbert's "Trial by Jury." Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to serve as programme sellers. When the draft programme was submitted to Ellen Terry she could at first hardly believe her eyes! "No, no! It's not possible!" she gasped, and then, assured that it was, could not speak for some time for laughter. An actress-less programme in honour of an actress! What a joke! Ellen Terry could not help relishing it, but to the consternation of the committee she said that she didnt want to spoil the joke by appearing herself! This threat led to the eleventh-hour addition to the programme of a series of tableaux in which the leading actresses in the London Theatre could at least be seen. How ungrateful and tiresome of Ellen Terry not to be satisfied by this concession! She despatched a letter to Mr Arthur (now Sir Arthur) Pinero, the chairman of the Executive: "Dear Pinny, An amusing notion this, of women of talent appearing in *tableaux* only, but if that has been decided upon by the Committee, I elect, if you please, to appear only in a tableau myself. I couldnt, I couldnt, I *couldnt* do anything else!"

I dont know who or what induced Ellen Terry to change her mind. Possibly it was the evidence that in one number at least, actresses predominated. This was a scene from "The Beauty of Bath," presented by "Mr Seymour Hicks and *all* the Bath Buns."

§ 2

MISS LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA, daughter of the distinguished painter to whom Ellen Terry refers in her memoirs in connection with his designs

Her smile was the most fascinating, irresistible thing imaginable. Bright and her art had not abated—not one little bit! Nor had her charm. Her voice had become a little jagged and harsh, but her eye was still a beautiful expressive eye! When she played the Nurse at the Lyceum learned, *filled* it. She had such breadth of style, such a lovely voice, such She swept on to the stage and in that magical way, never, never to be field" by Tom Taylor), Peg Woffington, and other parts of the kind. Those days she was playing Olivia (in a version of the "Vicar of Wakefield" by Tom Taylor), Peg Woffington, and other parts of the kind. In Years before, I had seen Mrs Stirling act at the Adelphi with Benjamin Webster, and had cried out: "*That's* my idea of an actress!" In scream when she found me dead was horribly real and effective.

she did not play for comedy at all, but was very emotional. Her parrot In the "Cords" scene, where the Nurse tells Juliet of the death of Paris, part like a female pantaloons. She did not assume any great decapitulation. She was the only Nurse that I have ever seen who did not play the was how it *was* played eventually.

coaxing Mrs Stirling to let the scene be played on these lines, but this mother?" I spoke with indignation, tears and rage. We were a long time answering I lost my temper, with genuine passion. At "Where's your I felt that Juliet was angry with the Nurse. Each time she delayed in in order to get that cheap reward, "a safe laugh." I felt that it was wrong. must give imitations of the Nurse on the line "Where's your mother?" Nurse to get the news of Romeo out of her. Tradition said that Juliet Tradition said that Juliet must go on coqueting and clicking over the

And yet she is not here...

The clock struck twelve when I did send the nurse,

scene beginning—

I had one battle with Mrs Stirling over "tradition." It was in the the chief honours.

old Tom Mead as the Apothecary—the two "old 'uns" romped away with She played it splendidly none the less. Indeed, she as the Nurse and rehearsals at all. How am I going to play the Nurse?"

"Oh, these modern ways!" she used to say. "We never have any that she had not rehearsed enough.

whom Henry had engaged to play the nurse, was always groaning out Juliet" I remember that Mrs Stirling, a charming and ripe old actress They were the real thing." While we were rehearsing "Romeo and of insufficient rehearsals, and says, perhaps, "Think of Irving's rehearsals! There is generally some "old 'un" in a company now who complains the end of my life, and I don't want to waste it in sleep!"

"Sleepy! Good heavens, no! I never sleep more than two hours. It's

more graceful and gentle flights of fancy associated with the drama, we should more securely vindicate our claim to be a civilised people."

Some guests at the banquet who no doubt applauded this remark proceeded to refute our claim to be "a civilised people," or at any rate a highly cultured one, by throwing away the delightful souvenir designed by William Nicholson with which they had been presented. The floor, when the company dispersed, was strewn with copies of a genuine work of art, a long roll depicting Ellen Terry in various parts, from Mamillius to Lady Cecily Waynflete.

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§ 2

MISS LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA, . . .
whom Ellen Terry refers in

The production was received with abuse by the critics. It was one of our failures, yet it ran a hundred and fifty nights!

Henry Irving's *Romeo* had more bricks thrown at it even than my *Juliet*! I remember that not long after we opened, a well-known politician who had enough wit, and knowledge of the theatre to have taken a more original view, came up to me and said:

"I say, E. T., why is Irving playing *Romeo*?"

I looked at him amazed. "You should ask me why I am playing *Juliet*! Why are we any of us doing what we have to do?"

"Oh, *you're* all right. But Irving!"

"I don't agree with you," I said. I was growing a little angry by this time. "Besides, who would you have play *Romeo*?"

"Well, it's so obvious. You've got *Terriss* in the cast."

"*Terriss*!"

"Yes, I don't doubt Irving's intellectuality, you know. But as *Romeo* he reminds me of a pig who has been taught to play the fiddle. He does it cleverly, but he would be better employed in squealing. He cannot shine in the part like the fiddler. *Terriss* in this case is the fiddler."

I was furious. "I am sorry you don't realise," I said, "that the worst thing Henry Irving could do would be better than the best of any one else."

When dear *Terriss* did play *Romeo* at the Lyceum two or three years later to the *Juliet* of Mary Anderson, he attacked the part with a good deal of fire. He was young, truly, and stamped his foot a great deal, was vehement and passionate. But it was so obvious that there was no intelligence behind his reading. He did not know what the part was about, and all the finer shades of meaning in it he missed. Yet the majority, with my political friend, would always prefer a *Terriss* as *Romeo* to a Henry Irving.

I am not going to say that Henry's *Romeo* was good. What I do say is that some bits of it were as good as anything he ever did. In the big emotional scene (in the Friar's cell), he came to grief precisely as he had done in *Othello*. He screamed, grew slower and slower, and looked older and older. When I begin to think it over I see that he often failed in such scenes through his very genius for impersonation. An actor of commoner mould takes such scenes rhetorically—recites them, and gets through them with some success. But the actor who impersonates, feels, and lives such anguish or passion or tempestuous grief, does for the moment in imagination nearly die. Imagination impeded Henry Irving in what are known as "strong" scenes.

He was a perfect *Hamlet*, a perfect *Richard III*, a perfect *Shylock*, except in the scene with *Tubal*, where I think his voice failed him. He

nervous athleticism behind the voice" (Shaw's phrase) "is still of championship quality. In new parts there may be a deterioration in pace. Ellen Terry finds it increasingly difficult to memorise words, especially the informal dialogue of the modern playwright, and this forces her to slow up her delivery against her will. But she is not compelled to slow up her movement and gesture. Her swiftness and agility are marvellous. She still skims over the ground on winged feet. She still has that peculiar quality of diffusing light and warmth directly she makes her entrance.

Yet, according to Miss Alma-Tadema, her stars are not lucky in 1906. This is perhaps not so strange as it seems.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. After studying a mass of documents, some of which I found after I had completed this chapter, I have come to the conclusion that Ellen Terry never "left" Irving. She does not seem, from the correspondence between her and Irving's manager, Bram Stoker, to have viewed her refusal to accompany Irving on the American tour of "Dante" as tantamount to "leaving" him for good. She broaches plans in her letters for appearing with him again in "The Merchant of Venice," and other old Lyceum successes, after that tour. It was not until Stoker made quite clear that these plans were unrealisable that she went into management at the Imperial, and arranged provincial tours ahead as an independent "star."

2. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by this chapter were: Elizabeth of York ("Henry of Lancaster," 1908); Aunt Imogen ("Pinkie and the Fairies," 1908); Alexia Vane ("At a Junction," 1909); Nance Oldfield ("A Pageant of Famous Women," 1909); Nell Gwynne ("The First Actress," 1911); The Abbess ("Paphnutius," 1914).

tomb, these steps were thronged with people, each one holding a torch, and the effect was magnificent.

At the opening of the Apothecary Scene, when Balthazar comes to tell Romeo of Juliet's supposed death, Henry was marvellous. His face grew whiter and whiter.

Then she is well and nothing can be ill;
Her body sleeps in Capulet's monument.

It was during the silence after those two lines that Henry Irving as Romeo had one of those sublime moments which an actor only achieves once or twice in his life. The only thing that I ever saw to compare with it was Duse's moment when she took Kellner's card in "Magda." There was absolutely no movement, but her face grew white, and the audience knew what was going on in her soul, as she read the name of the man who years before had seduced and deserted her.

As Juliet I did not *look* right. My little daughter Edy, a born archæologist, said: "Mother, you oughtnt to have a fringe." Yet, strangely enough, Henry himself liked me as Juliet. After the dress rehearsal he wrote to me that "beautiful as Portia was, Juliet leaves her far, far behind. Never anybody acted more exquisitely the part of the performance which I saw from the front. 'Hie to high fortune,' and 'Where spirits resort' were simply incomparable.... Your mother looked very radiant last night. I told her how proud she should be, and she was.... The play will be, I believe, a mighty 'go,' for the beauty of it is bewildering. I am sure of this, for it dumbfounded them all last night. Now you—we—must make our task a delightful one by doing everything possible to make our acting easy and comfortable. We are in for a long run."

To this letter he added a very human postscript: "I have determined not to see a paper for a week—I know they'll cut me up, and I don't like it!"

Yes, he *was* cut up, and he didn't like it, but a few people knew. One of them was Mr Frankfort Moore, the novelist, who wrote to me of this "revealing Romeo, full of originality and power."

"Are you affected by adverse criticism?" I was asked once. I answered then and I answer now, that legitimate adverse criticism has always been of use to me if only because it "gave me to think" furiously. Seldom does the outsider, however talented as a writer and observer, recognise the actor's art, and often we are told that we are acting best when we are showing the works most plainly, and denied any special virtue when we are concealing our method. Professional criticism is most helpful, chiefly because it induces one to criticise oneself. "Did I give that impression to any one? Then there must have been something wrong somewhere."

"The Vikings" had no terrors for me, because at Oxford I had devoted as much time to athletic sports as to history. It was the ease with which I kept my feet on the slope that led to my being singled out by Gordon Craig from the crowd of Kari's followers, and given the part of Kari's wife. Ibsen does not mention Mrs Kari, but Craig must have been convinced of her existence, for he had designed a dress for her. She had nothing to say, but a good deal to shout, and as I was not hindered by self-consciousness from giving tongue on the stage, I had another qualification besides my agility for playing the part. Besides serving Ellen Terry as a super in the theatre, I did jobs for her outside it, the jobs of a literary henchman. One of these jobs was to help her compile the lecture on "The Letters in Shakespeare's Plays." We also drafted one on "The Children in the Plays," which was completed later on.

Either in 1908, or 1909, Mr Hughes Massie, then a partner in the famous firm of Curtis Brown, literary agents, approached Ellen Terry about giving some Shakespeare lectures in America. It was suggested that the heroines would be a popular subject. The "literary henchman," who had been banished from Ellen Terry's society "like one infectious" since her marriage, was recalled from exile (the exile was not merely figurative as I was in Italy at the time) and reinstated in her old job. I have described the nature of my work for Ellen Terry in the preface to the lectures which were published for the first time in 1931. ("Four Lectures on Shakespeare" by Ellen Terry. Edited by Christopher St John. Martin Hopkinson.) The two on the heroines became in time, as more and more scenes were introduced, an epitome of Ellen Terry's Shakespearean impersonations. The preference, particularly common in England, for acting which creates the illusion that it is not acting at all, an illusion which an actress no longer young, cannot create in a young part, would alone have prevented Ellen Terry, at sixty-two, from giving these impersonations on the stage. Debarred from representing a Juliet, a Desdemona, a Beatrice, an Imogen to the life, she found scope in these so-called "lectures," for giving compelling presentations of the characters with which at the Lyceum she had been identified, and adding to them glimpses of others she had studied but never played.

"If you amount to nothing, your art in the end amounts to nothing; that is a fact almost biological in its brutal certainty." (Stark Young in "Theatre Practice.") Now Ellen Terry perhaps amounted to more in her sixties than at any time in her life. She was rich in experience of humanity, and had, stored up in her mind, a great treasure, accumulated during years of study of Shakespeare. She had developed into a philosopher, who had ceased to fear age, and had set about inventing a new beauty to take the place of the old beauty of her youth. It was unnecessary for her to

which makes her transcend all personal and individual feeling on the stage. No one plays a love scene better, but it is a *picture* of love that she gives, a strange exotic picture rather than a suggestion of the ordinary human passion as felt by ordinary human people. She is exotic—well, what else should she be? One does not, at any rate one should not, quarrel with an orchid and call it unnatural because it is not a buttercup or a cowslip.

I have spoken of the face as the chief equipment of the actor. Sarah Bernhardt contradicts this at once. Her face does little for her. Her walk is not much. Nothing about her is more remarkable than the way she gets about the stage without one ever seeing her move. By what magic does she triumph without two of the richest possessions that an actress can have? Eleanora Duse has them. Her walk is the walk of the peasant, fine and free. She has the superb carriage of the head which goes with that fearless movement from the hips. And her face! There is nothing like it, nothing! But it is as the real woman, a particular woman, that Duse triumphs most. Her Cleopatra was insignificant compared with Sarah's. She is not so pictorial.

How futile it is to make comparisons! Better far to thank heaven for both these great actresses.

I have found in one of my old diaries some impressions of Sarah recorded when they were fresh and I transcribe them to supplement what I have written today about her.

Saturday, June 11.—To see "Miss Sarah" as "Cléopâtre." She was inspired! The essence of Shakespeare's "Cleopatra." I went round and implored her to do Juliet. She said she was too old. She can *never* be old. "Age cannot wither her."

June 18.—Again to see Sarah—this time "La Dame aux Camélias." Fine, marvellous. Her writing the letter, and the last act the best.

July 11.—*Telegraph* says "Frou-frou" was "never at any time a character in which she (Sarah) excelled." Dear me! When I saw it I thought it wonderful. It made me ashamed of ever having played it.

Sarah Bernhardt has shown herself the equal of any man as a manager. Her productions are always beautiful; she chooses her company with discretion, and sees to every detail of the stage-management. In this respect she differs from all other foreign artists that I have seen. I have always regretted that Duse should play as a rule with such a mediocre company and should be apparently so indifferent to her surroundings. In "Adrienne Lecouvreur" it struck me that the careless stage-management utterly ruined the play, and I could not bear to see Duse as Adrienne beautifully dressed while the Princess and the other Court

because on the stage these powers of Ellen Terry's ran on the lightest of feet ("all divine things run on light feet," says Nietzsche) their strength and profundity were seldom recognised. Hence the general notion that she was a charming actress, but not a particularly thoughtful or intellectual one. In her lifetime, even the evidence supplied by her autobiography and the lectures that she had a first-rate brain, of quite as rare a quality as her imagination and her heart, could not upset the notion. It was not until she was dead, and her letters to Shaw were published, that it was even disturbed. The surprise expressed that *Ellen Terry* could hold her own in a correspondence with Shaw indicates how firmly rooted a false Ellen Terry legend was in the public mind.

Many incidents during the 1910-1911 American lecture-tour proved that Ellen Terry was still held in great honour in a country where memories are supposed to be shorter than elsewhere, and reputations are built and destroyed even more quickly than hotels. One of these happy incidents was the presentation of a medal by the Founders of the New Theatre, New York, of which Mr Winthrop Ames was the ambitious director. I believe he aspired to making this theatre a national temple of dramatic art, but it was described at this time as "the rich men's new plaything." The rich men appear to have played with the idea of an Order of Dramatic Merit. Its medal was first conferred on the distinguished Shakespearean scholar, Dr Furness of Philadelphia; the second recipient was Ellen Terry. Another medal, inscribed with a poem, was presented to her at Columbus. North, South, West, back East again she travelled, rejuvenated, in spite of the fatigue of the long journeys, by work, always her best tonic. The war against Time and Age was going very well now.

She returned to England in the spring of 1911, and now England wanted the lectures, that is if it could be made clear that they were not lectures in the ordinary sense of the word. It was feared that even the magic of Ellen Terry's name would not draw the British public to a "lecture," with its academic, dry-as-dust associations. So when Ellen Terry visited English towns, she was billed as appearing in "A Shakespearean Discourse With Illustrative Acting" or in "A Shakespearean Recital." She had never neglected the appeal to the eye in her stage performances—it was this which made Graham Robertson describe her as "The Painter's Actress"—and she now took great pains to present herself in the rôle of lecturer with beauty and dignity. Aided by her daughter, she created "scene" on the platform with dark green curtains, bunches of flowers and ingenious lighting. She wore flowing robes of crimson, or white or grey, the colour being determined by the mood of the discourses in her repertory and of the scenes she read, or acted, to illustrate

thing nice and in order for me as if we were going to stay in the town a month. Down went my neat square of white druggert; all the lights in my dressing-room were arranged as I wished. Everything was unpacked and ironed. One day when I came into some American theatre to dress I found Sally nearly in tears.

"What's the matter with you, Sally?" I asked.

"I 'avent 'ad a morsel to heat all day, dear, and I cant 'eat my iron."

"Eat your iron, Sally! What *do* you mean?"

"'Ow am I to iron all this, dear?" wailed Sally, picking up my Nance Oldfield apron and a few other trifles. "It wont get 'ot."

Until then I really thought that Sally was being sardonic about an iron as a substitute for victuals!

When she first began to dress me, I was very thin, so thin that it was really a grief to me. Sally would comfort me in my thin days by the terse compliment:

"Beautiful and fat tonight, dear."

As the years went on and I grew fat, she made a change in the compliment:

"Beautiful and thin tonight, dear."

Mr Fernandez played Friar Laurence in "Romeo and Juliet." He was a very nervous actor, and it used to paralyse him with fright when I knelt down in the friar's cell with my back to the audience and put safety pins in the drapery I wore over my head to keep it in position while I said the lines,

Are you at leisure, holy father, now
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

Not long after the production of "Romeo and Juliet" I saw the performance of a Greek play—the "Electra," I think—by some Oxford students. A young woman veiled in black with bowed head was brought in on a chariot. Suddenly she lifted her head and looked round, revealing a face of such pure classic beauty and a glance of such pathos that I called out:

"What a supremely beautiful girl!"

Then I remembered that there were no women in the cast! The face belonged to a young Oxford undergraduate, Frank Benson.

We engaged him to play Paris in "Romeo and Juliet," when George Alexander, the original Paris, left the Lyceum for a time. Already Benson gave promise of turning out quite a different person from the others. He had not nearly so much of the actor's instinct as Terriss, but one felt that he had far more earnestness. He was easily distinguished as a man with a purpose, one of those workers who "scorn delights and live

was pointed out by her business manager that the Australians who had never seen her act would be attracted to her lectures only by her reputation, and might think that in them she hardly lived up to it. "Why risk your prestige in a strange land at your time of life?" This gentleman also doubted the stability of the syndicate, whose representative believed that Australia would give Ellen Terry a warm welcome. Better Ellen Terry late than Ellen Terry never, he thought, and offered her fairly good terms. So, making light of the warnings that she was risking her life and her reputation, she told her croaking counsellors that it was her duty to accept them. It was important for her to make money. A third croaker, her lawyer, then intervened. In his view it was quite unnecessary for Ellen Terry to go on working, that is if she took his advice. This was to reduce her allowances to certain dependents (these allowances account in part for Ellen Terry's comparative poverty in her old age), to sell her securities, and purchase an annuity. The advice was conveyed to Ellen Terry through her business manager, who thought it excellent. He urged her to take it on the ground that she had done all that could be expected of her, and a great deal more, for her children, and that she ought not to go on working merely to enable her to leave them an income at her death.

It was lucky for Ellen Terry's children that, on reading this letter, she did not show any of that "curious hesitancy before she could bring herself to decisions" which her son says was characteristic of her. I fancy that a deal of scorn looked beautiful in the contempt and anger of her lip as she took up her pen to reply. It looks beautiful now in the note, in her firmest and boldest writing, with which the last sheet of the letter is inscribed: "Answered: Go ahead, and settle everything about tour *at once*." The note is dated, and the date proves that she must have made her decision to go to Australia directly the letter, urging her not to go, was received.

In spite of that troublesome heart, which in one of her letters from Australia to her daughter she likens to "a kicking donkey," Ellen Terry survived the exertion and excitement and eventual disappointment of the tour. She had an enthusiastic welcome from Melbourne on her belated Australian début in May, 1914. The press and public found her all that they had expected her to be, a total of rare talent, beauty and fascination, which had been accumulating for years. At the age of sixty-six she is described in the Melbourne journal, *The Age*, as "tall, graceful and fair-featured. With a chaplet round her head, and a flowing robe, such as she wore last night, she looked the queen of tears and laughter that audiences in England and America have acclaimed any time these past thirty years. The beauty that helped to make her what she is has

Johnston Forbes-Robertson made his first appearance at the Lyceum as Claudio. I had not acted with him since "The Wandering Heir," and his improvement as an actor in the ten years that had gone by since then was marvellous. I had once said to him that he had far better stick to his painting and become an artist instead of an actor. His Claudio made me "take it back." It was beautiful. I have seen many young actors play the part since then, but not one of them made it anywhere near as convincing. Forbes-Robertson put a touch of Leonces into it, a part which some years later he was to play magnificently, and through the subtle indication of consuming and insanely suspicious jealousy made Claudio's offensive conduct explicable at least. On the occasion of the performance at Drury Lane which the theatrical profession organised in 1906 in honour

had the art of making ceremonies seem very real. That it *was* a church, hardly a question that old Mead was a Friar. Henry out of the ordinary except for the Church Scene. There was no question The stage-management of the play was very good; the scenery nothing to know what I am driving at!

a great personal success for me. It is only in comedy that people seem to well again; but the Lyceum production was a great success, and Beatrice appearance as Beatrice at Leeds, and said that I never played the part so we had had some scenes of the same type. I have already told of my first Beatrice and Benedick in particular, because in Mrs Cowley's old comedy, to Our success with "The Belle's Stratagem" had pointed to comedy,

§ 6

"Thank you very much," he wrote to me after his first night as Paris, "for writing me a word of encouragement.... I was very much ashamed and disgusted with myself all Sunday for my poverty-stricken and thin performance.... I think I was a little better last night. Indeed I was much touched at the kindness and sympathy of all the company and their efforts to make the awkward new boy feel at home.... I feel doubly grateful to you and Mr. Irving for the light you shed from the lamp of art on life now that I begin to understand the labour and weariness the process of trimming the lamp entails."

ous days." Those laborious days led him at last to the control of two or three companies, all travelling through Great Britain playing a Shakespearean repertory. A wonderful organiser, a good actor (oddly enough, the more difficult the part the better he is—I like his *Lear*), and a man who has always been associated with high endeavour, Frank Benson's name is honoured all over England. He was only at the Lyceum for this one production, but he always regarded Henry Irving as the source of the good work that he did afterwards.

doctor flatly told me I must not appear for a fortnight at least. I had to give in, and then we went over the water to Auckland, twelve hundred miles or so. I was worse than ever when I got there, but I landed in a dear little hotel, and was just nursed through my great weakness by the kind landlady, and now I think I'll get through the rest of the lectures easily."

After August 4, 1914, the rest dwindled. "All engagements are being cancelled." (This was written from Melba's country home in Victoria in September.) "Yet all professional folk are acting 'for the War,' or for various charities, 'for love.'" Ellen Terry did her bit. "Melba is everlastingly promising to come and sing at this, that and the other little village round about fifty miles of her home, and I shall go with her to some of the affairs. So I call myself 'touring with Madame Melba.' ... This (Melba's cottage at Coldstream) is an ideal spot, and Melba makes it an ideal home. She is so strong in body and character—a *splendid* woman, a magnetic one. She is thinking out kindnesses every hour of the day. I just love her now." Looking over the hedges of myrtle in bloom at the distant hills yellow with wattle ("it is like mimosa, of a very large kind, very softly, beautifully golden, with strange dreamy silver leaves") Ellen Terry thinks of the Germans raging through "little Bruges," a place she had loved in the past. "Maybe they are in Kent by now, perhaps inhabiting *our cottages!* And perhaps you may be giving them some tea! Or toko! The horrors of this war for a few minutes now and again make me crazy, when I dare think, but I *darent*, and only pray that no harm comes near you, and that somehow or another we meet at home before Christmas."

The meeting was delayed until May, 1915. "I am strongly advised to go home via America, as it will not be safe in the Mediterranean, so I've written to Tyler (who offered me a big engagement when I was last there) to find out whether America would stand a few more Shakespearean discourses, so as to pay my way along. It is of no use trying to stay on here with the lectures. Every one in the 'entertaining' line is shutting up shop, except a few theatres with musical comedy. ... I should hate to be blown up by a mine."

Ellen Terry came very near being blown up, not by a mine, but by a torpedo on her supposedly safer way home. At the conclusion of the American lecture tour in April, 1915, she booked her passage back to England on an American liner, the *New York*. Charles Frohman, who was returning by the swifter and the more luxurious *Lusitania* on May 1, told Ellen Terry that a rich friend of his was anxious to put a suite on the boat at her disposal and urged her to let him make the arrangements. But she had promised her daughter not to come home

of my Stage Jubilee, one of the items in the programme was a scene from "Much Ado About Nothing." I then played Beatrice for the last time, and Forbes-Robertson played his old part of Claudio.

The Lyceum company was not a permanent one. People used to come, learn something, go away, and come back at a larger salary! Miss Emery left for a time, and then returned to play Hero and other parts. I liked her Hero better than Miss Millward's. Miss Millward had a sure touch; strength, vitality, interest; but somehow she was commonplace in this part.

Henry used to spend hours and hours teaching people. I used to think impatiently: "Acting cant be taught." Gradually I learned to modify this conviction and to recognise that there are two classes of actors:

1. Those who can only do what they are taught.
2. Those who cannot be taught, but can be helped by suggestion to work out things for themselves.

Henry said to me once: "What makes a popular actor? Physique! What makes a great actor? Imagination and sensibility." I tried to believe it. Then I thought to myself: "Henry himself is not quite what is understood by 'an actor of physique,' and certainly he is popular. And that he is a great actor I know. He certainly has both imagination and 'sense and sensibility.'" After the lapse of years I begin to wonder if Henry was ever really *popular*. It came naturally to most people to dislike his acting. They found it queer, as some found the art of Whistler queer. But he forced them, almost against their will and nature, out of dislike into admiration. They had to come up to him, for never would he go down to them. This is not popularity.

Brain allied with the instinct of the actor tells, but stupidity allied with the instinct of the actor tells more than brain alone. I have sometimes seen a clever man who was not a born actor play a small part with his brains, and have felt that the cleverness was telling more with the actors on the stage than with the audience.

Terriss, like Mrs Pritchard, if we are to believe what Dr Johnson said of her, often did not know what on earth he was talking about! One morning we went over and over one scene in "Much Ado"—at least a dozen times I should think—and each time when Terriss came to the speech beginning:

What needs the bridge much broader than the flood,
he managed to give a different emphasis. First it would be:
"What! *Needs* the bridge much broader than the flood!" Then:
"What needs the bridge *much* broader than the flood."
After he had been floundering about for some time, Henry said:

the *Empress of Ireland*. Her reticence about the things which moved her most deeply was sometimes misconstrued as insensitiveness. I remember hearing surprise expressed that she, who wept easily, did not shed a tear when she heard that Henry Irving had died suddenly at Bradford. She was reckoned emotional, even hysterically emotional in her younger days by Charles Reade, yet she was better able than most of us to refrain from a display of emotion which travesties a feeling beyond words and tears. We may perhaps attribute to this fine sense of the situation in which both are idle Ellen Terry's unemotional attitude during the War. She kept her head, and never joined in those emotional orgies of hatred and blood-lust in which old men, women and even children found solace for their non-combatant fate and their bereavements. At a time when the word "peace" was abhorrent Ellen Terry writes in her diary, "Glory to God in the highest. *Peace* on earth to men of good-will." There are many references in it to the "madness" of the war. "What madness! Thousands of lives lost today to gain ten yards in a little field." She had the common sense to appreciate Shaw's "Common Sense About the War." I am not trying to make her out a pacifist. She was no more a pacifist than she was a suffragist or a socialist, or any other "ist." "I cant help seeing this way, and that," she would say sooner or later during any argument. "I'm a wobbler."

This, I think, was true, and accounts for the fact that while in letters to her daughter, a doughty fighter in the cause of sex-equality, she appears to be of her feminist mind, in letters to her son she appears to be of his anti-feminist mind. But during the war she never wobbled far from a conviction that the civilised world had gone mad.

§ 4

"NEVER was any one less, actually ill than she," Gordon Craig writes of his mother, and attributes her constant references to "feeling ill" in her letters to Shaw to her habit of taking refuge in the Victorian excuse of ill-health when she was disinclined to see some one, or do something, and equally disinclined to give pain or offence by telling the truth. Gordon Craig's illusion that Ellen Terry was always as fit as a fiddle, even in her old age, is quite natural as her health was on the whole very good up to the time of his departure from England. Yet even before that date (1904) the trouble with her eyes, which often caused her excruciating pain, may have made the plea of "feeling ill" more genuine than her fine constitution and immense vitality let people believe. The trouble had become so serious in Australia, that when she reached America she felt that she ought not to wait until her return home to consult an "eye-

"Terriss, what's the meaning of that?"

"Oh, get along, Guv'nor, you know!"

Henry laughed. He never could be angry with Terriss, not even when he came to rehearsal full of absurd excuses. One day, however, he was so late that it was past a joke, and Henry spoke to him sharply.

"I think you'll be sorry you've spoken to me like this, Guv'nor," said Terriss, casting down his eyes.

"Now no hanky-panky tricks, Terriss."

"Tricks, Guv'nor! I think you'll regret having said that when you hear that my poor mother passed away early this morning."

And Terriss wept.

Henry promptly gave him the day off. A few weeks later, when Terriss and I were looking through the curtain at the audience just before the play began, he said to me gaily:

"See that dear old woman sitting in the fourth row of the stalls. That's my mother."

The wretch had quite forgotten that he had killed her!

He was the only person who ever ventured to "check" Henry, yet he never gave offence, not even when he wrote a letter of this kind:

MY DEAR GUV,—

I hope you are enjoying yourself, and in the best of health. I very much want to play 'Othello' with you next year (don't laugh). Shall I study it up, and will you do it with me on tour if possible? Say yes, and lighten the drooping heart of yours sincerely,

WILL TERRISS.

I have never seen any one at all like Terriss, and my father said the same. The only actor of my father's day, he used to tell me, who had a touch of the same insouciance and lawlessness was Leigh Murray, a famous *jeune premier*.

One night he came into the theatre soaked from head to foot.

"Is it raining, Terriss?" said some one who noticed that he was wet. "Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Terriss carelessly.

Later it came out that he had jumped off a steamboat into the Thames and saved a little girl's life.

Mr. Pinero, who was no longer a member of the Lyceum company when "Much Ado" was produced, wrote to Henry after the first night that it was "as perfect a representation of a Shakespearian play as I conceive to be possible. I think," he added, "that the work at your theatre does so much to create new playgoers—which is what we want, far more I fancy than we want new theatres and perhaps new plays."

A playgoer whose knowledge of the English stage extended over a period of fifty-five years, wrote another nice letter about "Much Ado."

which was passed on to me because it had some nice things about me in it.

SAVILE CLUB,
January 13, 1883.

MY DEAR HENRY,—

I were an imbecile ingrate if I did not hasten to give you my warmest thanks for the splendid entertainment of last night. Such a performance is not a grand entertainment merely, or a glorious pastime, although it was all that. It was, too, an artistic display of the highest character, elevating in the vast audience their art instinct—as well as purifying any developed art in the possession of individuals.

I saw the Kean revivals of 1855-57, and I suppose "The Winter's Tale" was the best of the lot. But it did not approach last night. . . .

I was impressed more strongly than ever with the fact that the plays of Shakespeare were meant to be *acted*. The man who thinks that he can know Shakespeare by reading him is a shallow ass. The best critic and scholar would have been carried out of himself last night into the poet's heart, his mind-spirit . . . The Terry was glorious. . . . The scenes in which she appeared—and she was in eight of the sixteen—reminded me of nothing but the blessed sun that not only beautifies but creates. But she never acts so well as when I am there to see! That is a real lover's sentiment, and all lovers are vain men.

Terriss has "come on" wonderfully, and his Don Pedro is princely and manly.

I have thus set down, my dear Irving, one or two things merely to show that my gratitude to you is not that of a blind gratified idiot, but of one whose intimate personal knowledge of the English stage entitles him to say what he owes to you.

I am

Affectionately yours,
A. J. DUFFIELD.

In 1891, when we revived "Much Ado," Henry's Benedick was far more brilliant than it was at first. In my diary, January 5, 1891, I wrote:

Revival of "Much Ado about Nothing." Went most brilliantly. Henry has vastly improved upon his *old* rendering of Benedick. Acts larger now—not so "finicking." His model (of manner) is the Duke of Sutherland. VERY good. I did some parts better, I think—made Beatrice a nobler woman. Yet I failed to please myself in the Church Scene.

Two days later.—Played the Church Scene all right at last. More of a *blaze*. The little scene in the garden, too, I did better (in the last act). Beatrice has *confessed* her love, and is now *softer*. Her voice should be beautiful now, breaking out into playful defiance now and again, as of old. The last . . . too, I made much more merry, happy, *soft*.

January 8.—I must make Beatrice more afterwards. This will be an improvement upon

first

She must be always *merry* and by turns scornful, tormenting, vexed, self-com-muning, absent, melting, brilliant, indignant, *sad-merry*, thoughtful, withering, gentle, humorous, and gay, Gay, Gay! Protecting (to Hero), motherly, very intellectual—a gallant creature and complete in mind and feature.

After a run of two hundred and fifty nights, "Much Ado," although it was still drawing fine houses, was withdrawn as we were going to America, for the first time, in the autumn (of 1883) and Henry wanted to rehearse the plays that we were to do in the States by reviving them in London at the close of the summer season. It was during these revivals that I played Jeannette in "The Lyons Mail"—not a big part, and not well suited to me, but I played it well enough to support my theory that what-ever I have *not* been, I *have* been a useful actress.

I always associate "The Lyons Mail" with old Mead, whose perform-ance of the father, Jerome Lesurques, was one of the most impressive things that this fine actor did with us. (Before Henry was ever heard of, Mead had played Hamlet at Drury Lane!) Indeed when Mead "broke up," Henry put aside "The Lyons Mail" for many years because he dreaded playing Lesurques' scene with his father without Mead. In the days just before the break-up, which came about because Mead was old, and—I hope there is no harm in saying of him what can be said of many men who have done finely in the world—too fond of "the wine when it is red," Henry used to suffer great anxiety in the scene, because he never knew what Mead was going to do or say next. When Jerome Lesurques is forced to suspect his son of the murder, he has a line:

Am I mad, or dreaming? Would I were.

Mead one night gave this less romantic reading:

Am I mad or *drunk*? Would I were!

The last episode in the eventful history of "Meadisms" occurred in "The Lyons Mail" when Mead came on to the stage in his own top-hat, went over to the sofa, and lay down, apparently for a nap! Not a word could Henry get from him, and Henry had to play the scene by himself. He did it in this way:

"You say, father, that I," etc. "I answer you that it is false!"

Mead had a remarkable foot. Norman Forbes called it an *architectural*

foot. Bunions and gout combined to give it a gargoyled effect! One night, I forget whether it was in this play or another, Henry, pawing the ground with his foot before an "exit"—one of the mannerisms which his imitators delighted to burlesque—came down on poor old Mead's foot, bunion, gargoyles and all! Hardly had Mead stopped cursing under his breath

it was in the bill at the Coliseum there was an air-raid. The coolness of Ellen Terry while the German bombs were raining from the heavens was not shown by many younger artists who were giving turns in the same programme. "You ought to be ashamed," the manager said to two who were screaming with terror in their dressing-room, and far too panic-stricken to appear. "Think of Ellen Terry! She's an old woman, and she's as cool as a cucumber. If she don't mind the bombs, why on earth should you?" At the moment Ellen Terry was on the stage, infecting the audience with her own calm courage as she proceeded with the "Mercy" speech:

The quality of mercy is not strained: (*Bang went a bomb*)
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven (*A louder bang*)

The audience could not help seeing the joke! They laughed, although they could hear the wings of death as well as the vibrant tones of Ellen Terry's voice, and she enjoyed the laughter, controlled it, and held them to the end of the scene, when the cheering made the noise of the infernal machines overhead inaudible.

In 1916 Ellen Terry made her first appearance on the screen. She accepted an offer from the Ideal Film Company to act in a film specially written for her. It was called "Her Greatest Performance," a title which proved to have a touch of irony, for, considered in relation to Ellen Terry's stage performances in the past, her screen performance did not amount to much. It might have amounted to more, for Ellen Terry showed in flashes that she was quite capable of adapting her flexible and fluid talent to a new medium, if she had been more intelligently directed. However well the method of instructing players before the camera to feel this and do that, without enlightening them about the motive, may work with some who can show the effect of an emotion without probing deeply into its cause, it did not work with Ellen Terry. She was hampered too by the film practice, of which she knew nothing, of concentrating attention on one person at a time. For example she saw in the trial scene in "Her Greatest Performance," when a mother has the terrible experience of seeing her son of whose innocence she is certain, made to appear guilty through a weight of incriminating evidence, her best opportunity for acting. But throughout the scene, the camera was picking out the prisoner, the witnesses, the judge, and members of the jury as well as the distraught mother. The scene was not moving in the same way or at the same pace as it was in Ellen Terry's imagination, with the result that when she was "shot," she was often expressing an emotion inappropriate at the particular moment. In other films in which she took part, "The Pillars of Society" (1920) and "The Bohemian Girl" (1921).

han on came Tyars, and brought down *his* weight heavily on the same foot. Directly Tyars came off the stage he looked for Mead in the wings and offered an apology.

"I beg your pardon. I'm really awfully sorry, Mead."

"Sorry! Sorry indeed!" the old man snorted. "It's a damned conspiracy!"

It was the dignity and gravity of Mead which made everything he said so funny. I am afraid that those who never knew him will wonder where the joke comes in.

I forget what year he left us for good, but in a letter of Henry's dated September, 1888, written during a provincial tour of "*Faust*," when I was ill and my sister Marion played Margaret instead of me, I find this allusion to him:

"Wenman does the Kitchen Witch now (I altered it this morning) and Mead the old one—the '*Climber*.' Poor old chap, he'll not climb much longer!"

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

1. *Irving's Othello*. The bundle of clothes Irving rolled up on the last night of his appearance as Othello appears to have been rescued by Ellen Terry. Years afterwards she wore Othello's green and gold robe in the ball-room scene in "*Romeo and Juliet*" when she played the Nurse in Doris Keane's production at the Lyric Theatre. This part of Irving's Othello dress is preserved in the Ellen Terry Memorial Museum.

2. *Pinero's Roderigo*. Edith Craig, who can remember Pinero as an actor, says that his performances were distinguished by the same cleverness as those given in more recent times by another actor-dramatist, Miles Malleeson. "Both mixed their fooling with brains." Malleeson, in Edith Craig's opinion, is the best Shakespeare clown on the modern stage.

3. *Shakespeare's Fathers*. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch drew attention this year (1932), in a lecture delivered in April, to the fact that daughters in Shakespeare are allowed fathers, but seldom mothers. He had forgotten, or perhaps may not have known, that Ellen Terry had anticipated him.

4. *The Letters in Shakespeare's Plays*. This was the first of Ellen Terry's now famous lectures on Shakespeare. Their history is given in Part II, Chapter II.

5. *Irving's Romeo*. The well-known politician who angered Ellen Terry by his criticism of this performance was the late Henry Labouchere.

6. *Sarah Holland*. In Ellen Terry's copy of her autobiography the story of Sally (her dresser) and the iron is annotated. "I am sure old Sally will be hurt to the heart by my making her leave out her 'h's'. Some damned kind friend will explain it to her, or she probably would not understand. So I shall put back most of the 'h's' in the next edition, only keeping 'ot and 'cat." Sally

CHAPTER III

OLD AGE: ARIEL IMPRISONED

(1921-1928)

§ I

WHATEVER may be said of the twentieth century in times to come, it seems improbable that any one will accuse those who lived in it of self-depreciation. Our use of the word "modern" in a highly complimentary sense will alone be evidence that we had a jolly good opinion of ourselves. "To the modern mind this seems absurd." "According to modern ideas, that is incredible." "A very brilliant novel, so modern." "A modern audience cannot be expected to swallow the kind of thing which went down with the simple playgoers of the past." (Probably "The Merchant of Venice.") Then, the historian of the future, who, viewing our age in perspective, may not share our impression of its importance, will be struck by our habit of boasting. "Always boasting of something: the conquest of the air, the conquest of the sea, the conquest of time, and a lot of other unconquerable things."

The boast I was thinking of when I began this chapter about Ellen Terry's old age was that of having prolonged the average span of human life. There appears to be some foundation for it. Statistics show that in the twentieth century the middle-aged have a greater expectation of life than they had in the nineteenth. But I have never read or heard or experienced anything which refuted the accuracy of the Psalmist's estimate of the limit to our time on earth. Surely he is quite right too about what happens when the limit is exceeded. We are sometimes tempted by an appearance of mental and physical vigour in people who have reached four-score to pooh-pooh the saying: "Then is their strength but labour and sorrow." We begin to think that there may be something in Shaw's "Back to Methuselah." Then comes the news that this hearty octogenarian, who last year was still riding to hounds, or that other, who two years ago was still in practice as a doctor, or a third who only the other day published a new book, has suddenly gone the way of all flesh. The Psalmist, even "according to modern ideas," was no fool. We must admit that he is not discredited by portraits of centenarians.

has been dead many years, and the old version of the story has been retained, in order that the reader may have in this note, a charming little piece of evidence of Ellen Terry's kind-heartedness and consideration.

7. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter VIII were: Camma ("The Cup," 1881); Leticia Hardy (The Belle's Stragem, 1881); Desdemona ("Othello," 1881); Juliet ("Romeo and Juliet," 1881); Jeannette ("The Lyons Mail," 1883); Clementine ("Robert Macaire," 1883).

is. Cannot remember new things. All is changed. Change at 73 puzzles the will. I live in puzzledom."

§ 2

I HAD grown accustomed by this time to hearing Ellen Terry called an "old lady," but the description still gave me a shock, almost as great as on the day I first heard it applied to her. A dark-skinned turbaned waiter in an Indian restaurant informed me that "the old lady had gone." I had been lunching with Ellen Terry and her daughter, and had left them a minute to get my coat. Meanwhile they had gone downstairs. There was no doubt that the man was referring to Ellen Terry, and I could not have been more staggered if I had heard a skylark or an angel described as "an old lady." I reflected that he was an Oriental, to whom all women who are not girls are old, and still resented the description. It seemed to me disrespectful as well as ludicrously inappropriate. People ought not to employ a common term when speaking of a being so obviously unique. This feeling has persisted and is as strong now as when Ellen Terry was alive.

Clemence Dane, the distinguished novelist and dramatist, who first became personally acquainted with Ellen Terry in the year 1922, showed a rare sensitiveness in immediately apprehending that there was something exceptional in this exceptional woman's old age. She felt the tragic contrast, of which few of Ellen Terry's intimate friends were conscious, between the swift radiant spirit, and the dark confined cell into which Time had driven it. "Ariel in the tree," a mutual friend told me was Clemence Dane's impression of Ellen Terry at 74, when people of inferior vision saw only a dear old lady, rather deaf, rather blind, unable to concentrate her attention on any subject for long, yet able to talk on every subject brilliantly in disconnected fragments, an old lady who had been a famous actress, and was now a famous legend. "Ariel in the tree" was my illumination. I now understood perfectly why I could not identify the old lady with Ellen Terry. Time had dealt with her as the "damn'd witch Sycorax" dealt with Ariel:

And for thou wast a spirit too delicate
To act her earthly and abhorr'd commands,
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee . . .
Into a cloven pine; within which rift
Imprison'd, thou didst painfully remain
A dozen years.

Ellen Terry's imprisonment lasted only a little more than half that time, and it was by no means continuously painful. She could

CHAPTER IX

THE LYCEUM IN THE 'EIGHTIES (*Continued*)

(1884-1887)

§ I

IN order of time my first tour in America with Henry Irving and the Lyceum company ought to come next, but it has seemed to me a better arrangement to continue the chronicle of the productions at the Lyceum to "Macbeth," and leave my American experiences to a later chapter. I think I have said before that "Macbeth" marks a turning-point in the history of the Lyceum, and now I want to emphasise it. The theatre and Henry Irving, and I too, I think, were then at the zenith. We had climbed to the maturity of our success, "wherewith being crowned, crooked eclipses 'gainst our glory" fought, and

Time that gave, did now the gift confound.

We had a little set-back in our climb in July 1884 when Henry produced "Twelfth Night." It was one of the least successful of Henry's Shakespearean productions. Terriss looked all wrong as Orsino; many other people were miscast. Henry said to me a few years later when he thought of doing "The Tempest," "I cant do it without three great comedians. I ought never to have attempted 'Twelfth Night' without them."

We had the curious experience of being "booed" on the first night. The chief reason was that people resented Henry's attempt to reserve the pit. He thought that the public wanted it. When he found that it was against their wish he had to give in.

His speech after the hostile reception of "Twelfth Night" was the only mistake that I ever knew him make. He was furious, and showed it. Instead of accepting the verdict, he denounced the first-night audience for giving it. He simply could not understand it!

My old friend Rose Leclercq, who was in Charles Kean's company at the Princess's when I made my first appearance on the stage, joined the Lyceum company to play Olivia. Strangely enough she had lost the touch for this kind of part. She, who had made one of her early successes as the

ing the fortune she earned on the stage. Now, by a strange irony, when she had run through the fortune, a woman came to the rescue.

In the summer of 1916 Edith Craig and I had let two rooms in our flat in London to an artist. We were delighted to have this dear and talented friend as a tenant, and to Ellen Terry, who always got on well with painters, she was soon a *persona grata*. As our intimacy ripened, we all discovered that "Tony," as Clare Atwood was known in our family circle, had an aptitude for "business" which none of us possessed. It was to "Tony" that Ellen Terry turned in her perplexity about her finances. "Am I £1600 to the good, or to the bad, Tony?" Tony, investigating the pass-book, was horrified. Her brushes lay idle for several weeks while she took counsel about what could be done to avert a catastrophe. Ellen Terry would soon have been insolvent, if Clare Atwood had not laid down her brushes, with a self-abnegation rare in the artist, and taken up the difficult problem of adjusting Ellen Terry's expenditure to her revenue. A very able and distinguished lawyer, Mr Gilbert Samuel (brother of Sir Herbert Samuel) volunteered his services, and the busy editor of *The Morning Post*, Mr H. A. Gwynne, also took an active part in the reform of Ellen Terry's finance. It was to him, as the husband of one of her oldest friends, that she entrusted a power of attorney. Her behaviour in the crisis was as calm and sensible as it had always been in the grave troubles of her life. She offered no opposition to the scheme proposed for balancing her budget. She was fully conscious that something had to be done, and that she must trust others to do it. The abolition of the allowances to dependents, the sale of her house in Chelsea and of some of her belongings, and the control of her personal expenditure, were the main features of the scheme. Its execution, and the augmentation of her capital by her film engagements in 1921 and 1922, sufficed to secure her a small income, and relieve her of anxiety about the future of her children (who despite their talents and their industry could earn money only fitfully), of Elena, and of those two beloved grandchildren in Italy. She made a will leaving the rehabilitated remnant of her fortune to these five descendants.

The economies which the rehabilitation involved, seemed absurd to her son, far away in Italy, and totally ignorant of the financial crisis. Besides the illusion that his mother was always as fit as a fiddle, he cherished another that she was always well-to-do. This illusion accounts for his doing scant justice in his biography to the friends who came to her rescue, and straightened out her tangled affairs. My collaborator, his sister, has asked me to refrain from any vindication of their action, to which she, who was on the spot, was convinced there was no alternative. But she wishes me to correct the inaccurate statement that among the possessions her mother

spirit of Astarie in "Manfred," was known to a later generation of players as the aristocratic dowager of stately presence and incisive repartee. Her son, Fuller Mellish, was also in the cast as Curio, and when we played "Twelfth Night" in America was promoted to the part of Sebastian. In London my brother Fred played it. Directly Fred walked on to the stage, looking as like me as possible, yet a *man* all over, he was a success. I don't think that I have ever seen any success so unmistakable and instantaneous.

In America "Twelfth Night" was liked far better than in London, but I never liked it. I thought our production dull, lumpy and heavy. Henry's Malvolio was fine and dignified, but not good for the play. I was handicapped as Viola by physical pain. On the first night I had a bad thumb—I thought it was a whitlow—and had to carry my arm in a sling. It grew worse every night, and I felt so sick and faint from pain that I played most of my scenes sitting in a chair. One night Dr Stoker, Bram Stoker's brother, came round between the scenes, and, after looking at my thumb, said:

"We'll soon put that right. I'll cut it for you."

He lanced it then and there, and I went on with my performance. George Stoker, who was just going off to Ireland, could not see the job through, but the next day I was in for the worst illness I ever had in my life. It was blood-poisoning, and the doctors were in doubt for a time as to whether they would not have to amputate my arm. They said that if George Stoker had not lanced the thumb so promptly, I *should* have lost my arm.

A disagreeable incident in connection with my illness was that a member of my profession made it the occasion of an unkind allusion (in a speech at the Social Science Congress) to "actresses who feign illness and have straw laid down before their houses, while behind the drawn blinds they are having riotous supper-parties, dancing the can-can and drinking champagne." Upon being asked for "name," the speaker would neither assert nor deny that she was referring to Ellen Terry (whose poor arm at the time was as big as her waist, and *that* has never been very small!).

I think we first heard of the affair on our second voyage to America, during which I was still so ill that they thought I might never see Quebec, and Henry wrote a letter to the press—a "scorcher." He showed it to me on the boat. When I had read it, I tore it up and threw the bits into the sea.

"It hasn't injured me in any way," I said. "Any answer would be undignified."

Henry did what I wished in the matter, but, unlike me, he never

it more Terrylike, painting the walls in the colours Ellen Terry particularly liked. When the best pieces of her furniture had been adroitly placed by her daughter it looked charming enough. On the day Ellen Terry moved in, the first thing which attracted her attention was the inscription her decorators had painted over the arch in the hall in Roman capitals, which if not quite so perfect as those on Trajan's column were good examples of good lettering: "Parva Domus, magna quies." "Yes. I ought to have great peace in this dear little place," she said wistfully, but she could not keep tumult out of it, or out of her life. Rarely, rarely came the days when Ariel was tranquil in the tree. Her daughter, whom she once described in a letter to Shaw as "her greatest care and her greatest comfort," was now a near neighbour. That was one of the advantages of the little flat, which some of her friends who saw only its disadvantages did not appreciate. They were always urging her to leave it, and take a house, better suited to the dignity of the ex-queen of the English theatre. They liked the idea of an ex-queen presiding over a court of her old admirers, men and women of mark, such as had attended suppers in the Beefsteak Room at the Lyceum in Irving's palmy days. They saw her seated at the head of a beautifully-appointed dinner table, "candles in branched silver candelabra," and all that, entertaining artists, travellers and scientists, perhaps even those royal personages, who indeed maintained an affectionate interest in Ellen Terry until the end of her life. Fantastic vision! Apart from the fact that Ellen Terry could not afford the luxury of hospitality on this scale, and at no time had been tempted to indulge in it, she became confused now when more than two or three people were gathered together in her presence. Her unfitness for entertaining, or for being entertained, was definitely confirmed in 1924 by a high medical authority. He gave the opinion that "it is very important that she should lead a very quiet life. Indeed it is wiser for her not to see more than one or two persons at a time." Yet those who had earlier perceived the disorientation caused by her seeing many persons at a time, or even a few too frequently, and had sought to limit the number of her visitors, were accused of cutting her off from her friends. Her daughter in particular suffered from this misrepresentation. Never popular with the majority of these friends, who were curiously jealous of the place she occupied in her mother's heart, Edy now became the victim of every sort of spiteful calumny. "She doesn't spoil me," Ellen Terry wrote of Edy to Shaw in 1896. "But let any one try to hurt me! Murder then, if it would save me." Now there were many injudicious people who were unconsciously trying to hurt Ellen Terry in these days by not allowing her to lead a quiet and retired life, and if Edy stopped short of murdering them, it was because she hoped to be able to save her mother in a more

forgot it, and never forgave. If the speech-maker chanced to come into a room where he was, he walked out. He showed the same spirit in the last days of his life, long after our partnership had come to an end. A literary club, not a hundred yards from Hyde Park Corner, "blackballed" me (although I was qualified for election under the rules) for reasons with which I was never favoured. The committee, a few months later, wished Henry Irving to be the guest of honour at one of the club dinners. The invitation was declined and the reason given.

§ 2

THE first night of "Olivia" at the Lyceum in 1885 was about the only *comfortable* first night that I have ever had! I was familiar with the part, and two of the cast, Terriss and Norman Forbes, were the same as at the Court, which made me feel all the more at home. Henry left a great deal of the stage-management to us, for he knew that he could not improve on Mr Hare's production. Only he insisted on altering the last act, and made a bad matter worse. The division into two scenes wasted time, and nothing was gained by it. *Never* obstinate, Henry saw his mistake and restored the original end after a time. It was weak and unsatisfactory but not pretentious and bad like the last act he presented at the first performance.

We took the play too slowly at the Lyceum. That was often a fault there. Because Henry was slow, the others took their time from him, and the result was bad.

The lovely scene of the vicarage parlour, in which we used a harpsichord and were accused of pedantry for our pains, did not look so well at the Lyceum as at the Court. The stage was too big for it.

The critics said that I played Olivia better at the Lyceum, but I did not feel this myself.

At first Henry did not rehearse the Vicar at all well. One day when he was stamping his foot in the manner of Mathias in "The Bells," my little Edy, who was a terrible child *and* a wonderful critic, said:

"Dont go on like that, Henry. Why dont you talk as you do to me and Teddy? At home you *are* the Vicar."

The child's frankness did not offend Henry, because it was illuminating. A blind man had changed his Shylock; a child changed his Vicar. When the first night came he gave a simple, lovable performance. Many people now understood and liked him as they had never done before.

In this, as in other plays, he used to make his entrance in the *skin* of the part. No need for him to shake a ladder at the side to work himself up as Macready is said to have done. He walked on, and was the

countered it. Clare Atwood, who knew her only late in life, when she was supposed not to see well, was often astonished at Ellen Terry's swift appreciation of some subtle change in the light on some object in a room. "Look at it now!" she would exclaim as the colour of a bunch of flowers changed with the light. "It is twice as beautiful." It was Clare Atwood who said after Ellen Terry's death that her memory of her would for ever be associated with the perception of beauty in the commonest things. Nevertheless, in old age Ellen Terry could neither read, nor write, without pain and discomfort.

She needed some one at her side for other reasons than this. She had to be restrained from over-taxing her strength; restrained from wearing thin garments on a cold day; restrained from giving away valuable possessions; restrained from going out into the streets of London, unattended, and risking her life in the traffic. With her Ariel spirit she had a great desire for freedom, and any one who tried to restrain her, daughter or friend or bodymaid, had a difficult task. In five years twenty-seven bodymaids came and went. They seemed hopelessly inefficient to us, but to serve Ellen Terry efficiently in these days required an amount of patience, devotion and quick intelligence, rare in the best-trained bodymaids. The amateurs were rather more successful than the professionals. I remember that Marguerite Steen, now a distinguished novelist, then a young stage aspirant, proved a very capable personal attendant to Ellen Terry in an emergency. At a later date a sensible, good-humoured Yorkshire woman who could keep her head and her temper in the most trying circumstances, entered Ellen Terry's service. She could turn her hand to anything, which was lucky, as circumstances made it necessary for her to be housekeeper, cook, maid, secretary, companion and nurse at one time or another. "Barney," as Ellen Terry called personal attendant, Number 28, was obstinately faithful. She was not popular with the faction of friends and relations who thought that Ellen Terry ought to have her way, to be allowed to walk into a pond, or burn herself to death, if she liked. They resented, as an inexcusable presumption, Barney's vigilant care of her precious charge. In the winter of 1927, during Barney's absence on a brief holiday, Ellen Terry had a serious attack of bronchial pneumonia. Barney hurried back to nurse her. It was during this illness that the "Let-her-do-as-she-likes" faction invaded her flat, and were extremely annoyed at not being immediately admitted to her bedroom. She had a bad patch on her lung at the time, and although she had rallied, and was out of danger, she was still breathing with difficulty. A trained nurse was in attendance as well as the presumptuous Barney. Yet one of the faction, who could never be persuaded that Ellen Terry's maladies were anything more serious than the vapours, was annoyed at being asked by Barney

simple-minded old clergyman, just as he walked on a prince in "Hamlet," a king in "Charles I," and a saint in "Becket."

"Olivia" has always been a family play. Eddy and Ted walked on the stage for the first time in the Court production. In later years Ted played Moses, and Eddy made her first appearance in a speaking part as Polly Flamborough. She has since played both Sophia and the Gipsy. My brother Charlie's little girl Beatrice made her first appearance as Bill; my sister Floss played Olivia on a provincial tour and my sister Marion played it at the Lyceum when I was ill.

I saw Floss play it, and took from her a lovely and sincere bit of "business." In the third act, where the Vicar has found his erring daughter and has come to take her away from the inn, I had always hesitated at my entrance as if I were not quite sure what reception my father would give me after what had happened. Floss in the same situation came running in and went straight to her father, quite sure of his love if not of his forgiveness.

I did *not* take some business which Marion did on Terriss's suggestion. When Thornhill tells Olivia that she is not his wife, I used to thrust him away with both hands as I said—"Devil!"

"It's very good, Nell, very fine," said Terriss to me, "but believe me, you miss a great effect there. You play it grandly, of course, but at that moment you miss it. As you say 'Devil' you ought to strike me full in the face."

"Oh, don't be silly, Terriss," I said, "she's not a pugilist."

Of course I saw, apart from what was dramatically fit, what would happen.

However Marion, very young, very earnest, very dutiful, anxious to please Terriss, listened eagerly to the suggestion during an understudy rehearsal.

"No one could play this part better than your sister Nell," said Terriss to the attentive Marion, "but as I always tell her, she does miss one great effect. When Olivia says 'Devil' she ought to hit me bang in the face."

"Thank you for telling me," said Marion gratefully.

"It will be much more effective," said Terriss.

It was. When the night came for Marion to play the part she struck out, and Terriss had to play the rest of the scene with a handkerchief held to his bleeding nose!

I think it was as Olivia that Eleonora Duse first saw me act. She had thought of playing the part herself some time, but she said: "*Never now!*" No letter about my acting ever gave me the same pleasure as this from her:

when Ellen Terry could not manage her home, and yet was unwilling to resign from management, she fled from her discomfort to E. D. G.'s comfortable house in the country, and was always received with open arms.

Another refuge was Graham Robertson's home at Witley. Graham Robertson was one of the few men whose friendship never failed Ellen Terry. From the day, when a boy of thirteen he had seen her in "The Merchant of Venice," and had identified her with the "Impossible She" of his dreams, her name had been graven on his heart. It mattered little to him when the external radiance of that golden Portia dimmed with age, for she had become one of his closest and dearest friends, and he could see the inward radiance of her heart. A similar catholicity of taste, a Blake drawing for joy one moment, a racy joke the next, bound them together intellectually. Ariel was never less conscious of the prison walls of age than at Sandhills. Writing to Edy from there on her 78th birthday, she says: "This is one of the most perfectly lovely days I have ever lived in... What lovely days are around us now! I wish you could see the flowers here... Alix and Graham and the doggies are all most harmonious."

"Alix," (Lady Alix Egerton) had in youth, like Graham Robertson, imaged Ellen Terry as a Fairy Princess, and an atmosphere of fairy-tales, ballads and romances still pervaded this friendship in later years. "Alix" was a poet, and Ellen Terry inspired her to pour out her heart in verse. That chameleon faculty in Ellen Terry, which made it easy for her to take the form and colour of any image of herself she saw in another's mind, was affected by age. Those who had idolised their own image of her, were perhaps never fully conscious that the disparity between it and the old Ellen Terry, which distressed, or annoyed, or alienated them, according to their temperament, was due to the fact that she had lost the power, and perhaps also the desire, to identify herself with the image. "Alix" was one of the few imagists among Ellen Terry's friends, who were unselfish enough not to abandon her when she withdrew from all images into herself.

Let the galled jade wince. The withers of those who now thought more of what they could do for Ellen Terry than of what she could do for them are unwrung. The friends who were in closest touch with that inner life of contemplation in which her spirit, uninjured by age, was enclosed, could do most for her. There was one, who by reason of a vein of mysticism in a character which in the common ways of life struck the casual observer as merely eccentric, was at home in this enclosure, and Ellen Terry, who had always had an affection for her, was now more conscious of an affinity between them. G. P. (Miss Gwennllian Palgrave, a

MADAME,—Avec Olivia vous m'avez donné bonheur et peine. *Bonheur* par votre art qui est noble et sincère . . . *peine* car je sens la tristesse au cœur quand je vois une belle généreuse nature de femme, donner son âme à l'art—comme vous le faites—quand c'est la vie même, *votre* cœur même qui parle tendrement, douloureusement, noblement *sous* votre jeu. Je ne puis me débarrasser d'une certaine tristesse quand je vois des artistes si nobles et hauts tels que vous et Irving. . . . Si vous êtes si forts de soumettre (avec un travail continu) la vie à l'art, il faut donc vous admirer comme des forces de la nature même qui auraient pourtant le droit de vivre pour elles-mêmes et non pour la foule. Je n'ose pas vous déranger, Madame, et d'ailleurs j'ai tant à faire aussi qu'il m'est impossible de vous dire de vive voix tout le grand plaisir que vous m'avez donné, mais puisque j'ai senti votre cœur, veuillez, chère Madame, croire au mien qui ne demande pas mieux dans cet instant que de vous admirer et de vous le dire tant bien que mal d'une manière quelconque. Bien à vous.

E. DUSE.

When I wrote to Duse the other day to ask her permission to publish this much-prized letter, she answered:

BUENOS AYRES,
September 11, 1907.

CHÈRE ELLEN TERRY,—

Au milieu du travail en Amérique, je reçois votre lettre envoyée à Florence.

Vous me demandez de publier mon ancienne lettre amicale. Oui, chère Ellen Terry; ce que j'ai donné vous appartient; ce que j'ai dit, je le peux encore, et je vous aime et admire comme toujours. . . .

J'espère que vous accepterez cette ancienne lettre que j'ai rendue plus claire et un peu mieux écrite. Vous en serez contente avec moi car, ainsi faisant, j'ai eu le moyen de vous dire que je vous aime et de vous le dire deux fois.

A vous de cœur,

E. DUSE.

Dear, noble Eleanora Duse, great woman, great artist—I can never appreciate you in words, but I store the delight that you have given me by your work, and the personal kindness that you have shown me, in the treasure-house of my heart!

When I celebrated my stage jubilee you travelled all the way from Italy to support me on the stage at Drury Lane. When you stood near me, looking so beautiful with wings in your hair, the wings of glory they seemed to me, I could not thank you, but we kissed each other and you understood!

§ 3

"CLAP-TRAP" was the verdict passed by many on the Lyceum "Faust," yet Margaret was the part I liked better than any other—outside Shakespeare.

told me, shortly after Ellen Terry's visit, that she had impressed them as one of the most spiritual women they had ever met. She was remembered in the prayers of the community in all her afflictions while she was alive, and now they pray for her soul. There is another nun at Stanbrook, besides the brilliant and lovable Abbess, to whom Ellen Terry was known personally. I. C. D., an intimate friend of Edy's, entered the convent in 1920.

To go back to the Order of the Beads. There was no more active member than "Bertie" or "The Bart," (Sir Albert Seymour). He and Graham Robertson, and "old Tom" (Tom Heslewood, actor and costume-designer) saved Ellen Terry from being obliged to put up with an almost exclusively feminine society during her last years. "Bertie has a heart of gold" was Ellen Terry's favourite tribute, and I never heard any one question that it was deserved. He understood her much better than many people who appeared to be nearer her intellectual level. Shrewd, rather than clever, he knew how to entertain her, and his quickness in seizing her mood astonished one in a person, who apart from her, seemed slow. I think "Bertie" studied Ellen Terry with the same diligence that others apply to their special subject, philosophy or art, or mathematics. He was really learned in Ellen Terry. This prevented him from forming some definite conception of her, which when she was old it would have fatigued her to try and satisfy. He was untiring in devising little pleasures for her, from a dinner at Claridge's, when she was in the mood to go out, to a present of fish or asparagus for her table when she was in the mood to stay at home. He fought gallantly by her side, when she was resisting Time, cossetting her with flatteries about her youthfulness. And when the war was over, even to those last days of her life when there was no past for her, and no future, only the present moment to be lived through, "Bertie" did not fail her.

Owing to my friendship with Edy, I saw a great deal of Ellen Terry after I had ceased to be associated with her as literary henchman, and had opportunities for observing how the Knights and Ladies of the Order of the Beads, whose cherished insignia had been strung into a necklace, behaved when their loyalty was tested. There were some who were not even conscious of a test. They found the singular fascination of Ellen Terry undiminished, and indeed it was as little affected by time as that spiritual flame which some could still see burning brightly in the mist which had gathered over her mind. There were others who were disconcerted by her inability to play her old part in their lives, and of these, few had the patience or unselfishness to adapt themselves to the change. The list of the faithful had grown tragically short by the year 1928 when Ellen Terry died, yet still it is too long for me to pay an adequate tribute

I played it beautifully sometimes. The language was often very commonplace—not nearly as poetic or dramatic as that of "Charles I"—but the character was all right—simple, touching, real.

The Garden Scene I know was unsatisfactory. It was a bad, weak love-scene, but George Alexander as Faust played it admirably. Indeed he always acted like an angel with me; he was so malleable, ready to do anything. He was launched into the part at very short notice, after H. B. Conway's failure on the first night. Poor Conway! It was Coghlan as Shylock all over again.

Henry called a rehearsal the next day, a Sunday, I think. The company stood about in groups on the stage while Henry walked up and down, speechless, but humming a tune occasionally, always a portentous sign with him. The scene set was the Broken Scene, and Conway stood at the top of the slope as far away from Henry as he could get! He looked abject. His handsome face was very red, his eyes full of tears. He was terrified at the thought of what was going to happen. The actor was summoned to the office, and presently Loveday came out and said that Mr George Alexander would play Faust the following night. Alec had been wonderful as Valentine the night before, and as Faust he more than justified Henry's belief in him. After that he never looked back. He had come to the Lyceum for the first time in 1882, an unknown actor from a stock company in Glasgow, to play Caleb Decie in "The Two Roses." He then left us for a time, returned for "Faust," and remained in the Lyceum company for some years playing all Terriss's parts.

Alexander had the romantic quality which was lacking in Terriss, but there was a kind of shy modesty about him which handicapped him when he played Squire Thornhill in "Olivia." "Be more dashing, Alec!" I used to say to him. "Well, I do my best," he said. "At the hotels I chuck all the barmaids under the chin, and pretend I'm a dog of a fellow for the sake of this part!" Conscientious, dear, delightful Alec! No one ever deserved success more than he did or used it better when it came, as the history of the St James's Theatre under his management proves. He had the good luck to marry a wife who was clever as well as charming, and could help him.

The original cast of "Faust" was never improved upon. What Martha was ever so good as Mrs Stirling? The dear old lady's sight had failed since "Romeo and Juliet," but she was very clever at concealing it. When she let Mephistopheles in at the door, she used to drop her work on the floor so that she could find her way back to her chair. I never knew why she dropped it—she used to do it so naturally with a start when Mephistopheles knocked at the door—until one night when it was in

of being the last artist of the theatre who made Ellen Terry laugh and weep, and say in a loud clear voice: "What a genius!"

Ellen Terry loved her own kith and kin, although she had no conventional family sentiment. She could criticise the performances of a Terry on the stage without prejudice. If they were good performances, she was enthusiastic. If they were not, or at any rate not good enough to please her, she could not be induced by any nonsense about blood being thicker than water to flatter them against her convictions. She believed in the great talent of her niece Phyllis Neilson-Terry from the day when as a girl of seventeen she played Viola, yet, while this belief was never shaken, it did not make her blind to "Phyl's" faults. While in New York in 1915 Ellen Terry wrote in her diary after seeing "Phyl" as Trilby that her performance "lacks shape." A professional dramatic critic once said that Ellen Terry's critical faculties "have always remained singularly undeveloped," which showed only that his own critical faculties were singularly undeveloped. I have never known a better critic of acting than Ellen Terry; her autobiography is rich in illuminating criticisms. It was after reading it that Henry W. Lucy wrote: "If you had not been a supreme actress you would have been a superlative dramatic critic."

So when "Phyl" roused Ellen Terry's enthusiasm as Viola, as Desdemona and as Juliet, she had reason to be proud, and probably was, as she was proud of her famous aunt. Speaking of her once in an interview with an American newspaper man, "Phyl" said:

I looked proudly at my father, because he had so splendid a sister. That performance of my aunt's in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," I remember as one of the perfect things of this world. If I were to attempt to analyse her performances, I should say that there are three qualities never absent from any of them. They are beauty, inspiration and buoyancy.

They met seldom in Ellen Terry's last years. A pity.

Ellen Terry's meetings with her sister Marion were also infrequent owing to Marion's ill-health. The elder sister Kate died in 1924. Her daughters, one of whom was on the stage, were devoted to "Aunt Nell," and on terms of great intimacy with her. They were very attentive in these times, and watched her interests on behalf of the family with a zeal which sometimes outran discretion.

It will be remembered that Ellen Terry had another sister, Florence, who was more like Ellen in temperament than either Kate or Marion. The love that Ellen had for Floss, fascinating, mischievous, buoyant Floss, whose career on the stage ended at her marriage in 1882, was inherited after her death by Floss's children. Her daughter Olive had the bigger share of the fortune. She and her brother Jack, and Ellen Terry's brother

my way and I picked it up, to the confusion of poor Mrs Stirling, who nearly walked into the orchestra.

"Faust" was abused a good deal as a pantomime, a distorted caricature of Goethe, and a thoroughly inartistic production. But it proved the greatest of all Henry's financial successes. The Germans who came to see it, oddly enough, did not scorn it nearly as much as the English who were so sensitive on behalf of the Germans, and the Goethe Society wrote a tribute to Henry Irving after his death, acknowledging his services to Goethe!

It is a curious paradox in the theatre that the play for which every one has a good word is often the play which no one is going to see, while the play which is apparently disliked and run down is crowded every night.

Our preparations for the production of "Faust" included a delightful "grand tour" of Germany. Henry, with his accustomed royal way of doing things, took a party which included my daughter Edy, Mr and Mrs Comyns Carr, and Mr Hawes Craven, who was to paint the scenery. We bought nearly all the properties used in "Faust" in Nuremberg, and many other things which we did not use, that took Henry's fancy. One beautifully carved escutcheon, the finest armorial device I ever saw, he bought at this time and presented it in after years to the famous American connoisseur, Mrs Jack Gardiner. It hangs now in one of the rooms of her house at Boston.

It was when we were going in the train along one of the most beautiful stretches of the Rhine that Sally Holland, who accompanied us as my maid, said:—

"Uncommon pretty scenery, dear, I must say!"

When we laughed, she added:

"Well, dear, *I* think so!"

During the run of "Faust," Henry visited Oxford and gave his address on "Four Actors" (Burbage, Betterton, Garrick, Kean). He met there one of the many people who had recently been attacking him on the ground of too long runs and too much spectacle. He wrote me an amusing account of the duel between them:

I had supper last night at New College after the affair. A— was there, and I had it out with him—to the delight of all.

"*Too much decoration,*" etc., etc.

I asked him what there was in "Faust" in the matter of appointments, etc., that he would like left out?

Answer: Nothing.

"Too long runs."

"You, sir, are a poet," I said. "Perhaps it may be my privilege some day

the O.M., but she knew it was the kind of recognition which would be agreeable to her because it did not involve the assumption of a title. "If they ever do anything for me, I hope it will be that," she said to me once with touching simplicity. I had not the heart to tell her that I had been informed by an authority on honours that "they" did not think her eligible for the O.M. and that the award had never even been discussed.

The agitation for some honour for Ellen Terry appears to have struck Sir James Barrie as quite reasonable. As Lord Rector of St Andrew's University, he recommended that there should be conferred on her the honorary degree of LL.D., and on May 5, 1922, she received it, in the distinguished company of Earl Haig, John Galsworthy, Colonel Freyburg V.C., E. V. Lucas, Sir Squire Bancroft and Sir James Guthrie. In the course of Sir James Barrie's characteristically whimsical speech about the recipients he referred to a form of proposal of marriage common in the 'eighties and 'nineties. "As there's no chance of Ellen Terry marrying me, will you?"

She made several public appearances this year, some of them on the stage at charity matinées. In October she unveiled a memorial tablet to Sarah Siddons at Bath. The deterioration in her handwriting in her diary suggests that her eyesight was becoming worse, but there are no signs of "disorientation" in the contents. It was extremely difficult for some of us at this time to "suffer fools gladly," when they spread reports that "poor Ellen Terry is quite dotty now," for they, in the prime of life, had a far weaker mental grasp of things than she in her old age, and had never experienced the joy of intimacy with Shakespeare's mind, with field and hedge and flower, and changing skies, which still was hers. In August, 1922, she wrote in her diary: "As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined. At school nowadays children are taught to write a fair hand, and tots of 4 and 5 are masters of an astonishingly good script." This particular entry is written in a beautiful hand. Here is another:

I want no appreciation or thanks for anything I have done in life. No. Let them thank me, if they must, by employing the outstanding talents of my children, who rather "lack advancement." They could give me help then, should I ever be needing help, other than that they give me now in love and friendship.

This was written after a visit to the Little Theatre, where Ellen Terry had been struck by the proof of Edith Craig's "outstanding talent," which her lovely production of a play by a Japanese poet, "The Toils of Yoshitomo," had afforded.

"Keep clear," "Keep up," are frequently written in her diary for 1923. "Lindsay has sent me such a lovely book, D. H. Lawrence's 'The Lady

to produce a play of yours. Would you like it to have a long run or a short one?" (Roars of laughter.)

Answer: "Well—er—well, of course, Mr Irving, you—well, a short run, of course for art, but—"

"Now, sir, you're on oath," said I. "Suppose that the fees were rolling in £10 and more a night—would you rather the play were a failure or a success?"

"Well, well, as you put it—I must say—er—I would rather my play had a long run!"

A—floored!

He has all his life been writing articles running down good work and crying up the impossible, and I was glad to show him up a bit!

The Vice-Chancellor made a most lovely speech after the address—an eloquent and splendid tribute to the stage.

Bourchier presented the address of the "Undergrads." I never saw a young man in a greater funk—because, I suppose, he had imitated me so often!

From the address:

"We have watched with keen and enthusiastic interest the fine intellectual quality of all these representations from Hamlet to Mcphistophiles with which you have enriched the contemporary stage. To your influence we owe deeper knowledge and more reverent study of the master mind of Shakespeare."

All very nice indeed!

I never cared much for Henry's Mcphistophiles—a twopence coloured part, anyway. Of course he had his moments—he had them in every part—but they were few. One of them was in the Prologue, when he wrote in the student's book, "Ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil." He never looked at the book, and the nature of the *spirit* appeared suddenly in a most uncanny fashion. Another was in the Spinning-wheel Scene when Faust defies Mcphistophiles, and he silences him with, "*I am a spirit*." Henry looked to grow a gigantic height—to hover over the ground instead of walking on it. It was terrifying.

I made valiant efforts to learn to spin before I played Margaret. My instructor was Mr Albert Fleming, who, at the suggestion of Ruskin, had recently revived hand-spinning and hand-weaving in the North of England. I had always hated that obviously "property" spinning-wheel in the opera, and Margaret's unmarkeable thread. My thread always broke, and at last I had to "fake" my spinning to a certain extent; but at least I worked my wheel right, and gave an impression that I could spin my pound of thread a day with the best.

Two operatic stars did me the honour to copy my Margaret dress—Madame Albani and Madame Melba. It was rather odd, by the way, that many mothers who took their daughters to see the opera of "Faust"

mentally during her life, had aged her. Mussolini had offered her an "appanage" so that she would never have to work again, but in spite of her exhaustion after a long illness in 1922, she had refused it. She would accept money from the Government only on her own terms, and made a proposition that a theatre in Rome should be subsidised where she could appear at intervals. Mussolini replied that if the proposition was in the interest of the Italian theatre it would be law for any government presided over by him. Perhaps it was the "if" which made Duse feel that she was being offered a stone when she was in urgent need of bread. Mr Cochran was offering her bread, and before he had even sent her a contract she telegraphed that she was leaving for England.

He went at once to Paris to meet her. The night she was to arrive at Victoria I went to the station as Ellen Terry's deputy to receive her. Edy would have been a more worthy one, but she was producing a play in Leeds, and I had to do my best in her absence. I bought a bunch of red roses, and through my fear of being late hung about the cold platform for hours. The train came in, but it was not until the other passengers had dispersed that Duse, who always shrank from crowds, emerged. She looked terribly fatigued and frail, and my first impulse, when I saw her dragging her weary body along, held up on one side by her ward, on the other by Mr Cochran, was to leave her alone. Then I remembered I was there on a mission, and ran straight to her, as I knew Ellen Terry would have run, heedless of Italian admirers pressing round me, and waving the red roses on high, said: "With Ellen Terry's love." At the sound of Ellen Terry's name, the tired white face became young and radiant. It was as if a volcanic region, harsh and touched with death, had suddenly become a smiling fertile land. Of all the tributes to Ellen Terry I can recall, that is the most precious. My mission over, I was going away, when I saw Duse beckon from the car. She wished to speak to Ellen Terry's deputy. She wished to send a message of love and gratitude. "Dites-lui qu'elle m'a donnée bonheur, quel bonheur! Belle, généreuse Ellen Terry!" And she invited the deputy to come and see her in the morning at Claridge's, to be thanked again when she was not so tired after an abominable journey.

Duse's matinées at the New Oxford Theatre attracted huge audiences, but always at her request a box was reserved for Ellen Terry. It was on June 7, 1923, that Duse made her first appearance in "The Lady from the Sea." "Oh! she was Perfection! There is none like her, none!" Ellen Terry writes in her diary, "I took her some flowers and she used them in the play. Afterwards I went round to see her. She seems even nobler now than when she was young. Was warmly affectionate to me and to my Edy." Another day in June. "'Ghosts.' A horrible play, but Duse superb."

would not bring them to see the Lyceum play. One of these mothers was Princess Mary of Teck, a constant patron of most of our plays.

Other people "missed the music." The popularity of an opera will often kill a play, although the play may have existed before the music was ever thought of. The Lyceum "Faust" held its own against Gounod. I liked our incidental music to the action much better. It was taken from many different sources and welded into an effective and beautiful whole by our clever musical director, Mr Meredith Ball.

In many ways "Faust" was our heaviest production. About four hundred ropes were used, each rope with a name. The list of properties and instructions to the carpenters became a joke among the theatre staff. When Henry first took "Faust" into the provinces, the head carpenter at Liverpool, Myers by name, being something of a humorist, copied out the list on a long thin sheet of paper, which rolled up like a royal proclamation. Instead of "God save the Queen!" he wrote at the foot, with many flourishes: "God help Bill Myers!"

The crowded houses at "Faust" were largely composed of "repeaters," as Americans call those charming playgoers who come to see a play again and again. We found favour with the artists and musicians too, even in "Faust"! Here is a nice letter I got during the run from that gifted singer and good woman, Madame Antoinette Sterling:—

MY DEAR MISS TERRY,—

I was quite as disappointed as yourself that you were not at St James's Hall last Monday for my concert. . . . Jean Ingelow said she enjoyed the afternoon very much. . . .

I wonder if you would like to come to luncheon some day and have a little chat with her? But perhaps you already know her. I love her dearly. She has one fault—she never goes to the theatre. Oh my! What she misses, poor thing, poor thing! We have already seen "Faust" twice, and are going again soon, and shall take the George Macdonalds this time. The Holman Hunts were delighted. He is one of the most interesting and clever men I have ever met, and she is very charming and clever too. How beautifully plain you write! Give me the recipe.

With many kind greetings,

Believe me sincerely yours,

ANTOINETTE STERLING MACKINLAY.

My girl Edy was one of the angels in the vision in the last act of "Faust," an event which Henry commemorated in a little rhyme that he sent me on Valentine's Day with some beautiful flowers:

White and red roses,
Sweet and fresh posies,
One bunch for Edy, *Angel* of mine—
One bunch for Nell, my dear Valentine.

formance charmed her so much that she said: "If I were going to play Romeo, I should come here every night and study that man. *That's* the way to stand under the balcony!" She was also greatly impressed by Conrad Veidt as the somnambulist in "Dr Caligari's Cabinet," wishing then that Henry Irving were alive to create the same kind of uncanny effect on the screen. So she chose as her birthday treat on February 27, 1924, a visit to the cinema, and we went to the Tivoli to see Charlie Chaplin's film "A Woman of Paris." The management gave her a royal welcome, not wholly disinterested, no doubt, for the visit was a splendid advertisement, Ellen Terry's birthdays always being in the news, but it gave Ellen Terry no less pleasure on that account. She liked these occasional basks in the limelight. She had been a Chaplin enthusiast since she had seen "The Kid" in 1921, which she describes in her diary as a "most moving movie. C. C. and the little chap (Jackie Coogan) splendid. The idea of heaven, splendid. All of them good." Now she recognised Chaplin's cleverness as a producer in "A Woman of Paris," saying, I remember, to the Tivoli manager that she had enjoyed it so much that she had not been disappointed that it was "Chaplin, with the part of Chaplin left out." (Chaplin appeared only for a minute in the film, and anonymously, as a railway porter.)

Another "good time" in 1924 was due to Bernard Shaw. Where was he, by the way, when the friend with whom he had corresponded for a period of twenty-five years, was an old woman? They met occasionally at the Shakespeare Festivals at Stratford-on-Avon. I can trace no other meetings, and no letters passed between them after that last one Ellen Terry wrote in 1922 to tell him about her LL.D. Shaw, whatever he is, is no masochist. Why should he enter Ellen Terry's second childhood? Yet it was as beautiful, and much wiser than her first. He had no more devout admirer of "Back to Methuselah" than the old love of his letters. Ellen Terry went to every performance of the first production of Shaw's "Pentateuch" at the Court Theatre in February, 1924. She was indignant with the Polonius critics who said: "This is too long."

In 1925 the name of Ellen Terry appeared in the New Year's Honours List. She had long ago forgotten the dream of the O. M. and the reality, the distinction of being created a Dame Grand Cross of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, gave her great pleasure. She was not perturbed, as I immediately was, at the change in her name the honour involved. "Ellen Terry is the most beautiful name in the world," Shaw wrote to her in 1896. "It rings like a chime through the last quarter of the 19th century. It has a lovely rhythm in it." Custom never reconciled me to the alteration in the rhythm produced by the addition of "Dame." Whether it was "Dame Ellen," or "Dame Ellen Terry" that

Mr Toole produced a burlesque on the Lyceum "Faust," called "Faust-and-Loose." Henry did not care for burlesques as a rule and in this one particularly disliked Fred Leslie's exact imitation of him. Face, spectacles, voice—everything was like Henry except the ballet-skirt Leslie wore. Marie Linden gave a really clever imitation of me as Margaret. She and her sister Laura both had the trick of taking me off. I recognised the truth of Laura's caricature in the burlesque of "The Vicar of Wakefield" when as Olivia she made her entrance, leaping impulsively over a stile.

There was an absurd chorus of girl "mashers" in "Faust-and-Loose," dressed in tight black satin coats, who besides dancing and singing had tunes in unison, such as "No, no!" "We will!" "As one of these girls Violet Vanbrugh made her first appearance on the stage. In her case we will!" proved prophetic. It was her plucky "I will get on" which finally landed her in her present eminent position.

Violet Barnes was the daughter of Prebendary Barnes of Exeter, who, when he found his daughter stage-struck, behaved far more wisely than most parents. He gave her £100 and sent her to London with her old nurse to look after her, saying that if she really "meant business" she would find an engagement before the £100 was gone. Violet had inherited some talent from her mother, who was a very clever amateur actress, and the whole family were fond of getting up entertainments. But Violet didn't know quite how far £100 would go, or wouldn't go. It happened to call on her at her lodgings near Baker Street one afternoon, and found her having her head washed, and crying bitterly all the time! She had come to the end of the £100, she had not got an engagement, and thought she would have to go home defeated. There was something funny in the tragic situation. Violet was sitting on the floor, drying her hair, crying, and drinking port wine to cure a cold in her head! I told her not to be a goose, but to cheer up and come and stay with me until something turned up. We packed the old nurse back to Devonshire. Violet came and stayed with me, and in due course something did turn up. Mr Toole came to dinner, and Violet, acting on my instructions to ask every one she saw for an engagement, asked Mr Toole! He said, "That's all right, my dear. Of course. Come down and see me tomorrow." Dear old Toole! The kindest of men! Violet was with him for some time, and played at his theatre in Mr Barrie's first piece "Walker Lonsdale." Seymour Hicks, and Mary Ansell (afterwards Mrs Barrie) were also in the cast.

This was all I did to "help" Violet Vanbrugh, now Mrs Arthur Bourchier and one of our best actresses, in her stage career. She helped herself, as most people do who get on. I am afraid that I have discour-

Ellen Terry's mind with these gracious folk, it had acquired a new significance.

It is fortunate that Ellen Terry kept a diary up to the end of the year 1926. There is the evidence of the many good times she had in spite of the limits age imposed on her freedom. How blessed are the survivors among her friends who helped her to forget these limits. With their names the words "I have had a most happy time" are frequently coupled in her later diaries. To "P" (Pauline Chase, the Peter Pan of other days, now Mrs Drummond), Ellen Terry frequently refers as a source of joy in 1926, which came very near to being her last year on earth. She had a serious illness in January, 1927, and her son was summoned from Italy. He came, and found her "pretending to be far more ill than she would in secret allow." This contradicts the opinion of the doctors that she was far more ill than she would, to cheerily optimistic visitors like her son, allow herself to appear. However, even this illness must be reckoned one of the good times, since it brought home for a few hours the beloved son whom she had not seen for three years.

After her death, when Edy was considering the publication of some of her letters and made an appeal in *The Times* to her correspondents to send any they had preserved, it became clear from the response that she had written fewer letters between 1921 and 1928 than at any period in her life. But there were interesting proofs that now and again she had followed her old custom of pouring out the largesse of her sympathy in this way, often on people whom she did not know personally. Lord Dunsany gave one of the proofs:

I have just read of your appeal for any letters from your much regretted mother. I have a very brief one indeed, but it always loomed large to me on account of the sympathy and kindness with which the scrap of paper was filled.

I was going to give a lecture on poetry in the autumn of 1921, and a journalist wrote under the heading of "The Muse Bemused," the following piece of journalism:

"Lord Dunsany is about to stump the country on behalf of the Poetry Society. His lecture bears the pretty title, 'What is the darned use of poetry?' He thinks there would be more suicides, were there no poets."

I received this, torn out of a newspaper with the last sentence underlined, and under it, written in ink: "I am *sure* so. E.T." and at the foot of the scrap was the signature in full, "Ellen Terry." I have kept it to this day. The postmark of the letter is November 21, 1921, but it may have been posted some while sooner than that, for the address, in a beautiful handwriting, was no more sufficient than "Lord Dunsany, London."

This little note outweighed in my mind all the usual sneers I have ever heard against poetry.

aged more stage aspirants than I have encouraged. Perhaps I have snubbed really talented people, so great is my horror, of girls taking to the stage as a profession when they don't realise what they are about. I once told an elderly aspirant that it was quite useless for any one to go on the stage who had not either great beauty or great talent. She wrote saying that my letter had been a great relief to her, as now she was not discouraged. "I have *both*."

§ 4

HENRY IRVING has often been attacked for not preferring Robert Louis Stevenson's "Macaire" to the version which he actually produced in 1883. It would have been hardly more unreasonable to complain of his producing "Hamlet" in preference to Mr Gilbert's "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern." Stevenson's "Macaire" may have all the literary quality that is claimed for it, but it is frankly a burlesque, a skit, a *satire* on the real Macaire. The Lyceum was *not* a burlesque house! Why should Henry have done it?

It was funny to see Toole and Henry rehearsing together for "Macaire." Henry was always *plotting* to be funny. When Toole as Jacques Strop hid the dinner in his pocket, Henry, after much labour, thought of his hiding the plate inside his waistcoat. There was much laughter later on when Macaire, playfully tapping Strop with his stick, cracked the plate, and the pieces fell out! Toole hadn't to bother about such subtleties, and Henry's deep-laid plans for getting a laugh must have seemed funny to dear Toole, who had only to come on and say "Whoop!" and the audience roared!

Henry's death as Macaire was one of a long list of splendid deaths. Macaire knows the game is up, and makes a rush for the French windows at the back of the stage. The soldiers on the stage shoot him before he gets away. Henry did not drop, but turned round, swaggered impudently down to the table, leaned on it, then suddenly rolled over, dead.

The production of Byron's "Werner" for one *matinée* was to do some one a good turn, and when Henry did a "good turn," he did it magnificently.¹ We rehearsed the play as carefully as if we were in for a long run. Beautiful dresses were made for me by my friend Alice Carr. But when we had given that one *matinée*, they were put away for ever. The play may be described as gloom, gloom, gloom. It was worse than "The Iron Chest."

¹ From my *Diary*, June 1, 1887.—"Westland-Martin Benefit at the Lyceum. A triumphant success entirely due to the genius and admirable industry and devotion of H. I. He is not the duller play to read as ever was! He made it *incredibly* interesting."

CHAPTER IV

DEATH: ARIEL SET FREE

(1928)

§ I

ON Christmas Day, 1925, Ellen Terry danced. On Christmas Day, 1926, Ellen Terry could not dance. She had caught cold in the absence of the vigilant "Barney," who was snatching one of her brief holidays from work more onerous than any one who has not ministered to an imprisoned Ariel can conceive, and sat at the head of her table in the despised little flat, shivering and coughing. Those who always suspected her of play-acting when she said: "I feel so ill," and she had given excellent performances of a sick woman in other days when she was in more robust health, might not have been alarmed, but Edy, who could always tell the difference between what was real and what was feigned in "I feel so ill," was anxious, and persuaded her mother to go to bed before we had come to the crackers. This time there was no mirth, nor music, to draw Ellen Terry back to the Christmas board. The little company dispersed silently at the news of a temperature, and other disquieting symptoms. The sequel to that Christmas dinner has already been described. Ellen Terry nearly made her final exit, then rallied, thanks to a superb constitution and immense vitality, and returned for another scene, a tragic scene, perhaps the most tragic in the whole drama. Four years and more have passed since it was acted, yet the recollection of it still appalls me. I could not re-create it in words without taking part in it, dealing blows right and left. There was a horrid scuffle in the dark in the year 1928 to win those three serene, sunlit months at Smallhythe before Ellen Terry's death.

On Christmas Day, 1927, Ellen Terry could not dance. She was far too weak. We had no lift to our flat in those days, but she had set her heart on spending Christmas with Edy, and Edy got four ambulance men from a hospital near by to carry her up the three long flights of steps. Our party of the lonely ones was much smaller than in 1925 or 1926, but Graham Robertson's turkey was as big as ever. Ellen Terry was gay, but more restless than I had ever seen her. I had heard of the therap

1. *Ellen Terry and Stage Aspirants.* "To him that newly cometh to change his life, let not an easy entrance be granted, but as the Apostle saith: 'Try the spirits if they be of God.'" This method, prescribed by St Benedict in his Rule, of testing the genuineness of a monastic vocation, was the method adopted by Ellen Terry of testing the genuineness of a stage vocation. For example, when a young schoolgirl, resolved to become an actress, was brought to see Ellen Terry by her grandmother for advice, she was told to go away and study three important Shakespeare parts for at least a year. "Come back to me then, and we can begin to talk about your going on the stage." The girl had the grit not to be discouraged. She returned to Ellen Terry at the end of the year, not only word-perfect in the parts, but able to show that she had studied them with industry and intelligence. Then Ellen

NOTES TO CHAPTER IX

While Henry was occupying himself with "Werner," I was pleasing myself with "The Amber Heart," a play by Alfred Calmour, a young man who was at this time Willis's secretary. I wanted to do it, not only to help Calmour, but because I believed in the play and liked the part of Ellaline. I had thought of giving a matinee of it at some other theatre, but Henry, who at first didn't like my doing it at all, said: "You must do it at the Lyceum. I can't let you, or it, go out of the theatre." So we had the matinee at the Lyceum. Mr Willard and Mr Beerbohm Tree were in the cast, and it was a great success. For the first time Henry saw me act—a whole part from the "front" at least, for he had seen and liked scraps of my Juliet from the "side." Although he had known me such a long time, my Ellaline seemed to come quite as a surprise. "I wish I could tell you of the dream of beauty that you realised," he wrote after the performance. He bought the play for me, and I continued to do it "on and off" here and in America until 1902. Many people said that I was good but the play was rubbish. This was hard on Alfred Calmour. He had created the opportunity for me, and few plays with the beauty of "The Amber Heart" have come my way since. "He thinks it's all his doing!" said Henry. "If he only knew!" "Well, that's the way of authors," I answered. "They imagine so much more about their work than we put into it, that although we may seem to the outsider to be creating, to the author we are, at our best, only doing our duty by him."

Our next production was "Macbeth." Meanwhile we had visited America three times. I must now give some account of my tours in America, of my friends there, and of some of the impressions that the vast, wonderful country made on me.

sire to "go home" had been the only one she had expressed in her darkness during January and February, stood the journey by car remarkably well, although she had been physically enfeebled by an attack of bronchitis in February. After she had been wheeled up the path into the old familiar living-room, shining bright with the pewter she had collected in the past, and was seated at the old familiar table, she exclaimed proudly to the doctor who had accompanied her on the journey: "This is my own house, doctor, bought with my own money." In this dear house, under the care of Barney, who had not been allowed to care for her in the house of darkness, and two nurses (for she needed attention day and night), cheered by the companionship of Edy, the only person in the world of whose identity she was now sure, she recovered her lost happiness. Her spirit was no longer tortured by the consciousness of physical and mental decay. When I met her again at Easter, the serenity of her face, which by some miracle had become young and lovely, made me think of her eightieth birthday in the house of darkness as a hideous nightmare.

There was the usual birthday limelight, an extra strong flood of it, because she had passed the four-score limit, and was still reputed vigorous. Ellen Terry would have loved to bask in it, but it could not penetrate her darkness. The B. B. C. had arranged a special Ellen Terry programme on the evening of her eightieth birthday, and in the hope that her "slight attack of bronchitis" would not prevent her from broadcasting a message to her loving public, a microphone had been installed in a sitting-room in the house where she was staying. One of the latest "portables" had also been brought down in order that she might listen to the programme, in which many members of the Terry family were taking part. I recall as the most poignant moment in my life hearing the mad scene from "Hamlet," with Fay Compton as Ophelia, downstairs, while upstairs the fair Ophelia of 1878, now a distraught old woman, "bound upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears do scald like molten lead," was playing Lear.

The loving public! Wretched as Edy was, she thought of that public on her mother's behalf. I had been put to work at my old "literary henchman's" job the day before, and had composed "a message." Years of experience had made me familiar with the kind of thing Ellen Terry liked to say on such occasions, and the message came to me automatically, in spite of the unfamiliarity of the situation. Now I could not go to Ellen Terry with my draft, hear her read it, and vivify it with spontaneous revisions as she read. I give the message here, as well as its history, for fear that at some future time it should be included among Ellen Terry's authentic utterances. It was a reply to a salutation, in verse, spoken by her old friend and stage comrade, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson.

work at the Lyceum was, she did not neglect her duty to them. She was all the same by no means a foolish fond mother. Her letters to her daughter (at the schoolgirl age), full of candid, yet helpful criticism, are sufficient proof that she was guiltless of "spoiling" her children, although in after years her son, conscious of having been consistently "spoiled" all his life by adoring women included his mother among them. After giving consideration to his conviction that "the blessed lady, my mother, no more knew how to bring up a boy than she knew how to swim," I find myself wondering whether the problem of bringing up this particular boy, whose character was indeterminate in his abnormally prolonged chrysalis days, would have been tackled more successfully by a father. The speculation reminds me that as a general rule men of genius in their childhood and adolescence have owed more to their mothers than to their fathers.

Ellen Terry, perhaps mindful of the holes left in her culture by her lack of ordinary education, sent the "little tots" of Longridge Road to school early. The school she chose was in Foxton Road, Earl's Court; it was kept by a Mrs Cole, a lady with ideas which in the 'eighties were considered advanced. She was a supporter of the new women's movement, and thought that girls ought to have as good an education as boys. She also seems to have been a pioneer of co-education. She took pupils of both sexes. Among the schoolmates of Ellen Terry's tots at Foxton Road, were Walter Raleigh, three of the Sickerts, and the children of Sir Edwin Arnold. Edith Craig tells me that her brother and she, when they first entered the school, were the most backward of the pupils in all but drawing, music and Shakespeare. In 1883 when Ellen Terry went on her first American tour, Edy became a boarder at the school, which had grown in size and reputation and been moved into larger premises; her brother was sent to a school for boys only in Kent. Later the girl's education was continued in Gloucestershire at the home of Mrs Cole's sister, Mrs Malleeson, and the boy's at Bradfield. The boy's was interrupted, or enriched, according to the point of view, by a tour in America. In Chicago in 1885 he played the small part of a gardener's boy in "Eugene Aram." "Why the dickens I was not kept to the stage from that time onwards if it was an actor they wanted, it is difficult to discover" he writes in 1932, and speculates it was because his mother was badly advised by friends who did not know that actors need not be sent to schools or colleges. Be that as it may—it is conceivable that Ellen Terry took advice, but not that she acted on it against her own convictions—Edward Wardell, as he was known in those chrysalis days was sent to school and college. From college (Heidelberg) he was also sent away, a punishment for an escapade, which owing to its innocent character, his mother thought far too severe. In 1889, at the age of seventeen, the boy who had been a failure at school and college, became a success on the stage. His first appearance in "The Dead Heart" is chronicled with pride by Ellen Terry in Chapter XII. His success suggests that even if an actor "need not be sent to school," it does him no harm.

Edith Craig, after her school-days in London and Gloucestershire, was

Darling! Every one calls me that nowadays." I gathered from this that Ellen Terry had not lost her old objection to gush. She had had experience recently of the conventionally affectionate terminology of nurses, who have a habit of addressing their patients as "dear" or "darling" in the hardest of voices. Now, seeing Barney's perplexed expression, she seized her hand, and said: "*She* can darling me as much as she likes. She's a dear, good thing, the salt of the earth."

Sooner or later the conversation would turn to Shakespeare, or the art of acting. Ellen Terry told me how she learned to cry on the stage. "I learned so well that it came too naturally to me. Then my difficulty was to stop my tears. No, I don't mean 'stop.' What is the word, the exact word, the *mot juste*?" I suggested "control," and it was approved.

April 12. E. T. very much interested to hear that there are only about 380,000 words in the English language. This was in reference to her readiness to bet that Shakespeare had the biggest vocabulary of any English writer.

April 13. "I am glad you think my Ted (Gordon Craig) writes so well. But you never saw him act! He acts far better than he writes."

"When we act, we must *feel*, not necessarily with our own personal feelings. Your voice, your movement, your whole body, are only an instrument for this *feeling*. However perfect you make the instrument, it won't resound, unless you can feel."

Once, only once that Easter-time, she cried, and said: "I hate being old. Yes, I just hate it. People are very kind, but that makes it worse. However, it's absurd to cry over spilt milk. I intend to go into my grave smiling." That was the day she spoke of mouths. We were talking about a certain actress, who, admired by many, was never admired by Ellen Terry. "I don't think she can be very good, because I can't remember her face. Describe it." I tried, admitting that the mouth was the weak point. "But the mouth is nearly every one's weak point. Look at mine! Much too large!"

When I got up to leave her one evening (I was staying at Edy's cottage, about a hundred yards from her house), she said it was unkind of me to go. She acted "being hurt" so well that I was completely taken in, and although I had strict instructions not to stay longer than an hour, and the time was up, sat down again. "You actually thought I meant it! Hurrah! I still can act! I have to act sometimes to find out if I can."

Then she referred to the possibility of a farewell appearance. "I believe, old as I am, people would still like to see me."

"I am talking much too loud. That was a fault of mine on the stage. Henry used to stand at the side in old days, and drop a handkerchief when I shouted."

and their devotion, unlike that of the majority of her men friends, stood the test of time.

In the 'eighties, the man who was on terms of the closest intimacy with her was Henry Irving. She was, in the first phase of their friendship, his "leading lady" in life as well as in the theatre, and in both the position brought her mingled happiness and unhappiness. Even when the happiness predominated, she appears to have resented as a woman the egotism which as Irving's colleague in the theatre she could not help admiring. The original of the letter from him she quotes on page 232 expressing his sense of her value to him, and his contrition for appearing ungrateful for her advice and help, bears the pathetic comment in her writing: "How seldom!" But it was by no means seldom that he wrote to her lovingly and tenderly. If these letters were sincere, there can be no doubt that he loved her, although he loved himself and his calling as an actor, which were really inseparable, more. The nature of her affection for him is more obscure. Her analysis of his character, given at the end of Chapter XIII, suggests that she was repelled by some of his qualities. She admired him more as an actor and a worker than as a man. The frequent recurrence of an entry in her diary for 1887: "Quarrelled with Henry" makes one think that there was already a rift within the lute which was eventually to silence the incidental lovers' music in the drama of their friendship. Another recurring entry: "To the Grange with Henry to dinner" reminds me to add that in the late 'eighties Irving took a house with a large garden at Brook Green, rebuilt it and furnished it. He sometimes entertained his friends there, but never lived in it. The garden was laid out on the lines of Ellen Terry's garden at Harpenden, one sign of many that she cherished the memory of her Hertfordshire idyll.

Her children were christened and confirmed at this period. Lady Gordon, an old friend of Ellen Terry's, and Henry Irving, acted as godmother and godfather at the christening of the boy, the explanation of Henry and Gordon being added to the name Edward by which he had been called from infancy, after his father. Edith received the additional names of Geraldine and Ailsa; Geraldine she derived from her godmother, Mrs Stephen Coleridge, Ailsa from Ailsa Craig. During a tour in Scotland in the early 'eighties, Ellen Terry, in the company of Henry Irving and her boy, had visited Ailsa Craig. "What a good stage name!" Ellen Terry said: "A pity *you* can't have it, Ted. I shall give it to Edy." It was given to Edy at her christening, by her godfather, Henry Irving, and the "Craig" was appended to her brother's Christian names also. Edy was known as "Ailsa Craig" when she first went on the stage. Subsequently, to avoid confusion with another actress who had taken the name, she dropped the "Ailsa," in favour of Edith.

A trait of Ellen Terry's, which cannot be ignored in any faithful and comprehensive study of her complex character, is illustrated by this entry in her diary after Edy's confirmation in Exeter Cathedral: "Edith confirmed today (January 11, 1887) by the Bishop of Exeter (Dr Bickersteth). A private single ceremony by the Bishop for Edith. Strange! Over th ago Father

time to go down to Smallhythe to see his mother. It was difficult to make him realize her serious condition.

His sister had to take him by the scruff of his neck (so to speak), and put him, dazed, and protesting that he had an important meeting with representatives of the press, into Olive Terry's car. With Olive, a driver of Brooklands calibre, at the wheel, the car reached Smallhythe in record time.

Edy's first action on arrival was very characteristic of her. She put on the smock she always wore at Smallhythe so that her mother would see something familiar, if she rallied and recognised her. Ellen Terry was past recognition of either of her children through the eye, but I had a proof the day after their arrival that she was not past finding consolation in their presence in the room. Her right arm twitched incessantly, and I, who am credited with the gift of a healing hand, sat by her bed, gently stroking that poor arm, thinking sadly that never again should I see it spring up with that wonderful gesture of love, and encircle the neck of some one dear to her, a familiar action of hers. Her hand gripped mine; it was searching for something. I knew for what, when it reached my thumb. Edy has a peculiar square thumb. "The murderer's thumb" it has been called in jest. It was by the thumb, Ellen Terry knew she could tell whether the hand on hers was Edy's. Edy was the one she wanted to give her a hand in her extremity, and with a strong powerful gesture of disappointment, she pushed my hand away.

"Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Ellen Terry had written in her last diary. I remembered those words while she lay dying. Who would watch with Ellen Terry in this hour, who would turn a deaf ear to the voice of the tempter, saying: "There is nothing to be done. You can be of no use. Go about your business, or go to sleep." All indeed that can be *done* for the dying, whose senses are shut, is done best by experts. Ellen Terry had efficient careful nurses who, after she was stricken, did their duty tenderly as well as capably. She had a shrewd, intelligent doctor, who was moreover a kind and sympathetic man with a real affection for her. When he knew that she was doomed, he devoted all his skill to allaying the restlessness which was the one distressing symptom during her passage from life to death. This good physician, tired after a long day's work, thought nothing of getting out his car in the middle of the night, and driving down to Smallhythe with an anodyne, when a nurse telephoned that Ellen Terry could not rest. Then there was Barney, well trained in apprehending, through some channel of communication unknown to others, what Ellen Terry wanted. "She wants something cool on her forehead." "She wants to be moved." "She

of the Atlantic and of a strange, barbarous land. Our farewell performances in London had cheered me up a little—though I wept copiously at every one—by showing us that we should be missed. Henry Irving's position seemed to be confirmed and ratified by all that took place before his departure. The dinners he had to eat, the speeches that he had to make and to listen to, were really terrific!

One speech at the Rabalais Club had, it was said, the longest peroration on record. It was this kind of thing: Where is our friend Irving going? He is not going like Nares to face the perils of the far North. He is not going like A—to face something else. He is not going to China, etc.,—and so on. After about the hundredth "he is not going," Lord Houghton, who was one of the guests, grew very impatient and interrupted the orator with: "Of course he isn't! He's going to New York by the Cunard Line. I'll take him about a week!"

Many people came to see us off at Liverpool, but I only remember seeing Mrs Langtry and Oscar Wilde. It was at this time that Oscar Wilde had begun to curl his hair in the manner of the Prince Regent. "Curly hair to match the curly teeth," said some one who disliked him. Oscar Wilde *had* ugly teeth, and he was not proud of his mouth. He used to put his hand to his mouth when he talked so that it should not be noticed. His brow and eyes were very beautiful.

Well, I was not "disappointed in the Atlantic," as Oscar Wilde was the first to say, though many people have said it since.

My first voyage was a voyage of enchantment to me. The ship was laden with pig-iron, and she rolled and rolled and rolled. She could never roll too much for me! I have always been a splendid sailor, and I feel jolly at sea. The sudden leap from home into the wilderness of waves does not give me any sensation of melancholy.

What I thought I was going to see when I arrived in America I hardly remember. I had a vague idea that American women wore red flannel shirts and carried bowie knives, and that I might be sandbagged in the street! From somewhere or other I had derived an impression that New York was an ugly, noisy place.

Ugly! When I first saw that marvellous harbour I nearly cried—it was so beautiful. Whenever I come now to the unequalled approach to New York I wonder what Americans must think of the approach from the sea to London! How different are the mean, flat, marshy banks of the Thames and the wooden toy lighthouse at Dungeness to the vast, spreading Hudson with its busy multitude of steamboats, and ferryboats, its wharf upon wharf, and its tall statue of Liberty dominating all the racket and bustle of the sea traffic of the world!

That was one of the few times in America when I did not miss the

There can be no privacy for a public personage in the last hours of life, as Edy soon discovered. She had a staff of willing helpers in the news bureau, but her presence there was at times imperative. I left her at the telephone at about ten o'clock that evening and crossed the road again to the farm. As I walked up the brick path to the door, I heard from the room on the right where Ellen Terry lay, a loud clear voice, the voice I had never expected to hear again, call out: "Edy!" Now, lest any one should think I heard it only with the mind's ear, I must add that Barney, who was in her bedroom upstairs, heard it too, and came to the window, amazed at the miracle. I hurried back to the cottage to tell Edy to come at once. "She is calling for you." Then Edy went into her mother's room again, and never left it until 8.30 the next morning when Ariel was roused from her earthly sleep in the prison, and set free.

During those hours, Edy sat by the bed constantly, holding that beautiful, still expressive right hand. The left one was powerless, motionless. The face had not been much changed by that cruel blow from Nature. But the breath of life was changed. It came more and more painfully as the dawn approached. The hand, gripping Edy's, moved from finger to finger, and with a last effort the voice, not miraculously clear and loud now, but thick and indistinct, spelt out on those fingers the word "Happy," "H-a-p-p-y" over and over again.

Ellen Terry's long-haired, brindled cat, Boo-boo, the cherished pet of her last years, had not been seen for days. This rather callous beauty had never had much use for Ellen Terry since she had grown too tired with age to make a fuss of her. Boo-boo was essentially a fair-weather friend, and she hid, panic-stricken, when the dread bolt descended. But Edy's less beautiful black cat, Snuffbox, did not hide. On this last night of Ellen Terry's life she left her comfortable home at our cottage, and came down through the orchard to join the watchers.

I was one of the disciples whose spirit was willing, out whose flesh was weak. At about midnight I threw myself on a hard garden-seat in the old cow-shed, Ellen Terry's garden-house, just outside the room where she lay, and fell asleep to the sound of her rattling breath. I woke up at the moment it ceased. I came into the room, and heard Edy cry out: "Light! More light!" and someone drew back the curtains. The glorious July sun was now high in the heavens. There was an atmosphere of exaltation in that death-chamber. "She can't be dead!" said her niece, Olive. "She can't be dead!" And indeed the prison had vanished directly Ariel had flown into the light. A young, beautiful woman lay on the bed, like Juliet on her bier. I knelt by the bier and said, "Hail Mary." "Flowers," said Edy, and then we went through the syringa-scented orchard, like acolytes, in our white smocks, to gather flowers. The

poetry of the past. The poetry of the present, gigantic, colossal and enormous, made me forget it. The "sky-scrappers"—what a brutal name it is when one comes to think of it!—so splendid in the landscape now, did not exist in 1883, but I find it difficult to divide my early impressions from my later ones. There was Brooklyn Bridge though, hung up high in the air like a vast spider's web.

Between 1883 and 1893 I noticed a great change in New York and other cities. In ten years they seemed to have grown with the energy of tropical plants. But between 1893 and 1907 I saw no evidence of such feverish increase. It is possible that the Americans are arriving at a stage when they can no longer beat the records! There is a vast difference between one of the old New York brownstone houses and one of the fourteen-storied buildings near the river, but between this and the Times Square Building or the still more amazing Flatiron Building, which is said to oscillate at the top—it is so far from the ground—there is very little difference. I hear that they are now beginning to build downwards into the earth, but this will not change the appearance of New York for a long time.

I had not to endure the wooden shed in which most people landing in America have to struggle with the Custom-house officials—a struggle as brutal as a "round in the ring," as Paul Bourget describes it. We were taken off the *Britannic* in a tug, and Mr Abbey, Laurence Barrett, and many other friends met us—including the much-dreaded reporters.

They were not a bit dreadful, but very quick to see what kind of a man Henry was. In a minute he was on the best of terms with them. He assumed what I used to call his best "jingle" manner—a manner full of refinement, bonhomie, elegance and geniality.

"Have a cigar—have a cigar." That was the first remark of Henry's, which put every one at ease. He also wanted to be at ease and have a good smoke. It was just the right merry greeting to the press representatives of a nation whose sense of humour is far more to be relied on than its sense of reverence.

"Now come on, all of you!" he said to the interviewers. He talked to them all in a mass and showed no favouritism. It says much for his tact and diplomacy that he did not "put his foot in it." The Americans are suspicious of servile adulation from a stranger, yet are very sensitive to criticism.

"These gentlemen want to have a few words with you," said Henry to me when the reporters had done with him. Then with a mischievous expression he whispered: "Say something pleasant! Merry and bright!"

Merry and bright! I felt it! The sense of being a stranger entering a strange land, the rushing sense of loneliness and foreignness was over-

THE gipsy woman at the toll-gate, one of Ellen Terry's affinities, had with deft, loving hands, laid out the fair body of Juliet on her bier. Edy had put a sprig of jasmine between the quiet folded hands. The room was brilliant with flowers. In Ellen Terry's old bedroom upstairs Barney had found her shabby little copy of "The Imitation of Christ." "Look at this!" And Edy read on the fly-leaf:

No funeral gloom, my dears, when I am gone;
Corpse-gazings, tears, black raiment, graveyard grimness.
Think of me as withdrawn into the dimness,
Yours still, you mine. Remember all the best
Of our past moments, and forget the rest.
And so, to where I wait, come gently on.

Under these lines by William Allingham was written: "I should wish my children, relatives and friends to observe this when I die. E. T."

Here was a definite direction of great value to Edy in this hour. The news bureau had now become a stage-manager's office, in which arrangements were being made for a series of ceremonies. Edy now knew from her mother how they were to be conducted, and what was to be their character. Her brother, who had returned at the news of his mother's death, undertook to carry out the plans in London. A few intimate friends, and a few villagers alone were allowed to gaze at Juliet on the bier. I was instructed by Edy to copy the inscription in "The Imitation of Christ" and affix it to the gate that all who passed by might know that there was to be no funeral gloom in their grief at Ellen Terry's death. A friend in Tenterden had the happy idea of having it printed, and displayed elsewhere, so that those last wishes might become more widely known. In the big living-room of the farm, Olive and a band of helpers set to work to transform a piece of shimmering gold material that a young actor had brought back from India for a dress for Ellen Terry, years ago, into a pall. We began picking rosemary and other sweet herbs of grace to carpet the floor of Smallhythe church where the first ceremony was to take place. These obsequies were to shine with the radiance of Ellen Terry. Candles and candlesticks were collected. Let there be light and colour everywhere.

I sat some time meditating over that little copy of "Tommy Kempy," as I did not know then that Ellen Terry affectionately called him. The lines scored were a revelation to me, such a revelation as people had in other times when, after the death of some fine gallant or beautiful lady, they discovered that underneath their finery they had always worn a hair shirt.

powering my imagination. I blew my nose hard and tried to keep back my tears, but the first reporter said: "Can I send any message to your friends in England?"

I answered: "Tell them I never loved 'em so much as now," and burst into tears! No wonder that he wrote in his paper that I was a "woman of extreme nervous sensibility." Another of them said that "my figure was spare almost to attenuation." America soon remedied that. I began to put on flesh before I had been in the country a week, and it was during my fifth American tour that I became really fat for the first time in my life.

When we landed I drove to the Hotel Dam, Henry to the Brevoort House. There was no Diana on the top of the Madison Square Building then. The building did not exist, to cheer the heart of a new arrival as the first evidence of beauty in the city. There were horse trams instead of cable cars, but a quarter of a century has not altered the peculiarly dilapidated carriages in which one drives from the dock, the muddy sidewalks, and the cavernous holes in the cobble-paved streets. Had the elevated railway, the first sign of *power* that one notices after leaving the boat, begun to thunder over the streets? I cannot remember New York without it.

I missed then, as I miss now, the numberless *hansom*s of London plying in the streets for hire. People in New York get about in the tram cars, unless they have their own carriages. The hired carriage is rare and takes advantage of the lack of competition to charge two dollars (8s.) for a journey which in London would not cost fifty cents (2s.)!

I cried for two hours at the Hotel Dam! Then my companion, Miss Harries, came bustling in with: "Never mind! here's a piano!" and sat down and played "Annie Laurie" very badly until I screamed with laughter. Before the evening came my room was a bower of roses, and my dear friends in America have been throwing bouquets at me in the same wish way ever since. I had quite cheered up when Henry came to take me to see some minstrels who were performing at the Star Theatre, the very theatre where in a few days we were to open. I didn't understand any of the jokes which the American comedians made that night, but liked their dry, cool way of making them.

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we were very few theatres in New York when we first went there. That part of the city which is now "up town" did not exist, and what then "up" is now more than "down" town. The American stage changed almost as much. In those days their most distinguished

funeral gloom, my dears, when I am gone." The spectators had remembered that as well as the mourners who followed in the wake of the coffin in its shimmering gold veil.

Another strange sight, exquisitely strange, was to be seen as the coffin was borne up the steps into the church. There, outside the porch was a guard of honour fit for one who had been simple in her life, and loved beauty in her ways. The men from the fields had left their work for an hour, and had come to the church with their tools—haymakers with their rakes and pitchforks, shepherds with their crooks and sheep-dogs—and were standing there, in the attitudes of good and faithful toilers of the earth, resting from their labours.

Inside the church, no dirge, but hymns of praise, hymns Ellen Terry had loved, and from the little choir rose a voice that she had loved, the voice of her friend and neighbour, Lady Maud Warrender, who opened each verse of the old song of praise, "Ye watchers and ye holy ones," with an exaltation inspiring us to think of resurrection, not of death. The reader of the lesson exalted us too with the praise of famous men:

Such as found out musical tunes,
And recited verses in writing.

"All things bright and beautiful." The feeling that Ellen Terry was inspiring every one to substitute these things for funeral gloom persisted. The town of Tenterden was beautiful, if not bright, as we strange mourners in our festal clothes drove through it in cars, following Ellen Terry on her last journey to London, the journey that, living, she had taken so many times. Quiet was the beauty here. All business had been abandoned. The shops were closed; the sun shone on houses darkened by drawn blinds. The people stood silent and motionless in the High Street, as if they were observing the Two Minutes Remembrance on Armistice Day. Not a sound except the muffled peal of the big church bells.

Our destination was Golders Green. A great crowd had collected outside the crematorium, a crowd not of curious sightseers, but of sympathetic friends. They were of all classes and all ages, but the majority were poor and old.

The songs of praise rose again in this burning temple. The clear black-bird voices of boy choristers piped out, "All Things Bright and Beautiful," just before all that was left of that bright and beautiful thing, Ellen Terry, was committed to the flames.

Late that night, the slender boat-shaped coffin was taken to St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, and now it was very light, for within was only a silver casket, containing some silvery dust.

actors were playing Shakespeare or old comedy, and their new plays were chiefly "imported" goods. Even then there was a liking for local plays which showed the peculiarities of the different States, but they were more violent and crude than now. The original American genius and the true dramatic pleasure of the people is, I believe, in such plays, where very complete observation of certain phases of American life and very real pictures of manners are combined with comedy almost childlike in its naïveté. The sovereignty of the young girl which is such a marked feature in social life is reflected in American plays.

This is by the way.

What I want to make clear is that in 1883 there was no living American drama as there is now, that such productions of romantic plays and Shakespeare as Henry Irving brought over from England were unknown, and that the extraordinary success of our first tours would be impossible now. We were the first and we were pioneers, and we were *new*. To be new is everything in America.

Such palaces as the Hudson Theatre, New York, were not dreamed of when we were at the Star, which was, however quite equal to any theatre in London in front of the footlights. The stage itself, the lighting appliances, and the dressing-rooms were inferior.

Henry made his first appearance in America in "The Bells." He was not at his best on the first night, but he could be pretty good even when he was not at his best. I watched him from a box. Nervousness made the company very slow. The audience was a splendid one—discriminating and appreciative. We felt that the Americans *wanted* to like us. We felt in a few days so extraordinarily at home. The first sensation of entering a foreign city was quickly wiped out.

The difference in atmosphere disappears directly one understands it. I kept on coming across duplicates of "my friends in England." "How this girl reminds me of Alice." "How like that one is to Gill!" We had transported the Lyceum three thousand miles—that was all.

On the second night in New York it was my turn. "Command yourself. This is the time to show you can act!" I said to myself as I went on to the stage of the Star Theatre, dressed as Henrietta Maria. But I could not command myself. I played badly and cried too much in the last act. But the people liked me, and they liked the play, perhaps because it is historical; and the Americans are passionately fond of history. The audience took up many points which had been ignored in London. I had always thought Henry as Charles I most moving when he made that involuntary effort to kneel to his subject, Moray, but the Lyceum audiences had never seemed to notice it. In New York the

So perhaps we were not wrong in loving, for Ellen Terry, the hubbub after her death.

When it had subsided, after that final ceremony at St Paul's, Covent Garden, her son and daughter brought the silver casket, the work of Paul Cooper, great silversmith, good friend, a friend dear to mother and children alike, from the deserted church to Edy's flat which overlooks the churchyard. We had converted a small room there into an oratory, had it blessed, and erected an altar on which the casket stood for over a year, a sanctuary lamp burning night and day. It was not until August 1929 that the negotiations for obtaining a "faculty" for placing the ashes in St Paul's, Covent Garden, and erecting a memorial tablet, were concluded. Such are the law's delays, ecclesiastical as well as civil.

During that year, while Ellen Terry was kept waiting, her husband James Carew, showed his devotion to her by sending flowers for the oratory every week.

Sir John Martin Harvey unveiled the tablet in August 1929. Like the casket, its setting was the work of Paul Cooper. The niche in which the casket stands is enclosed by a plain bronze grille of beautiful workmanship. The canopy and base of the monument are in dark green marble. On the base is the concise epitaph, graved in austere Roman capitals: "Ellen Terry. Actress. Born 1848. Died 1928." When the design was submitted to the ecclesiastical authorities, they made the characteristically Protestant stipulation that the base must be constructed in such a way that it would be impossible to place flowers on it. Perhaps it was feared that Ellen Terry's dust would be venerated like that of a saint. And indeed Ellen Terry was a saint, although her sanctity was not of the orthodox kind. She worked miracles in her lifetime by her kindness, constantly turning hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. Among the hundreds of letters Edy received after her death there are few in which some kind word or deed which had a lasting influence is not recorded. A young actor who had been in the cast of "Romeo and Juliet" when Ellen Terry played the Nurse wrote that her "kindness was as real and impartial and personal as the sunlight, but it was a human sun that seemed only to see the things one wanted seen. The rest werent there, or it didnt matter in the least if they were. If that is not theological charity, what is? It is the greatest virtue, and only saints and very great artists can possess it. It makes life possible."

Another letter from one who had known her from childhood, one of the "Casella girls," who were on terms of the closest intimacy with her, speaks of Ellen Terry as "the most generally beloved being of her time. No wonder either, for she was endowed by Nature with the most precious gifts that she has to bestow: genius, beauty, grace, charm, *goodness*

audience burst out into the most sympathetic spontaneous applause that I have ever heard in a theatre. I know that there are some advanced stage reformers who think If they ever succeed they will suppress a great deal of good acting. It is said that the American actor, Edwin Forrest, once walked down to the footlights and said to the audience very gravely and sincerely: "If you don't applaud, I can't act," and I do sympathise with him. Applause is an instinctive, unconscious act expressing the sympathy between actors and audience. Just as our art demands more instinct than intellect in its exercise, so we demand of those who watch us an appreciation of the simple unconscious kind which finds an outlet in clapping rather than the cold, intellectual approval which would self-consciously think applause derogatory. I have yet to meet the actor who was *sincere* in saying that he disliked applause.

§ 3

My impression of the way American women dressed in 1883 was not favourable. Some of them wore Indian shawls and diamond earrings. They dressed too grandly in the street and too dowdily in the theatre. All this has changed. The stores in New York are now the most beautiful in the world, and the women are dressed to perfection. They are as clever at the *demi-toilette* as the Parisian, and the extreme neatness and smartness of their street clothes are very refreshing after the hoppy, blowy, trailing dresses, accompanied by the inevitable feather boa of which English girls now seem so fond. The universal white "waist" is very pretty and trim on the American girl. It is one of the distinguishing marks of a land of the free, a land where "class" hardly exists. The girl in the store wears the white waist; so does the rich girl on Fifth Avenue. It may cost anything from seventy-five cents to fifty dollars!

London when I come back from America always seems at first like an ill-lighted village, strangely tame, peaceful and backward. Above all, I miss the sunlight of America, and the clear blue skies of an evening.

"Are you glad to get back?" said an English friend.

"Very."

"It's a land of vulgarity, isn't it?"

"Oh yes, if you mean by that a wonderful land—a land of sunshine and light, of happiness, of faith in the future!" I answered. I saw no misery or poverty there. Every one looked happy. What hurts me on coming back to England is the *hopeless* look on so many faces; the de-

jection and apathy of the people standing about in the streets. Of course there is poverty in New York, but not among the Americans. The Italians, the Russians, the Poles—all the host of immigrants washed in daily on the bosom of the Hudson—these are poor, but you don't see them unless you go Bowery-ways, and even then you can't help feeling that in their sufferings there is always hope. The narrow man of today is the millionaire of tomorrow! Vulgarly? I saw little of it. I thought that the people who had amassed large fortunes used their wealth beautifully.

When a man is rich enough to build himself a big new house, he remembers some old house which he once admired, and he has it imitated with all the technical skill and care that can be had in America. This accounts for the odd jumble of styles in Fifth Avenue, along the lakeside in Chicago, in the new avenues in St Louis and elsewhere. One millionaire's house is modeled on a French château, another on an old Colonial house in Virginia, another on a monastery in Mexico, another is like an Italian palazzo. And these imitations are never weak or pretentious. The architects in America seem to me to be far more able than ours, or else they have a freer hand and more money. It is sad to remember that Mr Stanford White was one of the best of these splendid architects.

It was Stanford White with Saint-Gaudens—that great sculptor, whose work dignifies nearly all the great cities in America—who had most to do with the Exhibition buildings of the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. It was odd to see that fair dream city rising out of the lake, so far more beautiful in its fleeting beauty than the Chicago of the stock-yards and the Pit which had provided the money for its beauty. The millionaires did not interfere with the artists at all. They gave their thousands—and stood aside. The result was one of the loveliest things conceivable. Saint-Gaudens and the rest did their work as well as though the buildings were to endure for centuries instead of being burned in a year to save the trouble of pulling them down!

Saint-Gaudens gave me a cast of his medallion of Bastien-Lepage, and wrote to a friend of mine that "Bastien had *'le cœur au métier.'*" So has Miss Terry, and I will place that saying in the frame that is to replace the present unsatisfactory one." He was very fastidious about this frame, and took a lot of trouble to get it right. It must have been very irritating to Saint-Gaudens when he fell a victim to that extraordinary official puritanism which sometimes exercises a petty censorship over works of art in America. The medal that he made for the World's Fair was rejected at Washington because it had on it a beautiful little nude figure of a boy holding an olive branch, emblematical of young America.

old timbered farmhouse of the Tudor period, should be acquired as a national possession, and preserved as a memorial to her. The suggestion was adopted by a preliminary committee, formed to consider various plans for giving some permanent expression to England's gratitude for her work and her life. A prospectus was drawn up, outlining a scheme for a memorial at Smallhythe, and sent to eminent men and women in Great Britain and the United States, with an invitation to join a General Committee to be appointed for the purpose of appealing to the public for funds. The response to this invitation was encouraging. Many people with famous names joined the General Committee. But apparently some of them had not read the prospectus and were not in the least interested in the scheme. A few even criticised it later on as impracticable. There was nothing abnormal in this; there are defeatists on all general committees. Still I think that the Ellen Terry Memorial general committee had an unusually large number.

Its first meeting was held at the Globe Theatre in December 1928. The few of the famous members who attended offered no criticism of the scheme in its general outlines, and no alternative scheme was suggested. No alternative scheme was suggested either by people outside the committee, who excused themselves from supporting the memorial at Smallhythe on the ground that it did not appeal to them. They were in favour of honouring dear Ellen Terry of course, but not in this way. "And what an absurdly large sum you are trying to raise! As if you could hope to get anything like £15,000!" I remembered the "trifles" of £100 generous Ellen Terry had so frequently contributed to any charity in need. Now people, far more wealthy than she ever was, were talking in this niggardly way about her memorial.

The Executive Committee, appointed by the ornamental General Committee, got to work (at least about two or three of them did, which I believe is also not abnormal) and drew up a prospectus, more definite than the brief one, privately circulated among eminent folk, on which to issue the appeal for contributions. The main objects of the memorial scheme were to acquire Ellen Terry's house, and endow it with an income sufficient to keep it in repair and pay the salary of a custodian; to adapt the rooms to the purpose of a memorial museum and library, with the exception of Ellen Terry's bedroom which was to be kept as it was in her life-time; and to adapt the barn adjacent to the house to the purpose of a theatre, where it would be possible to commemorate the anniversary of Ellen Terry's death at Smallhythe by a dramatic performance every year. The cost of carrying out the scheme adequately was carefully gone into by expert advisers, and £15,000 was rather below than above their estimate.

the negroes! The dear old man! He was very bent and very old; and looked like one of the logs that he used to bring in for the fire—a log from some hoary, lichened tree whose life was long since past. He would produce a pin from his head when you wanted one; he had them stuck in his pad of white woolly hair: "Always handy then, Missie," he would say.

"Ask them to sing 'Sweet Violets,' Uncle Tom."

He was acting as a sort of master of the ceremonies at the entertainment the servants were giving me.

"Dont think they know dat, Miss Olly."

"Why, I heard them singing it the other night!" And she hummed the tune.

"Oh, dat was 'Sweet Vio-*letts*,' Miss Olly!"

Washington was the first city I had seen in America where the people did not hurry, and where the social life did not seem entirely the work of women. The men asserted themselves here as something more than machines in the background untiringly turning out the dollars, while their wives and daughters give luncheons and teas at which only women are present.

Beautifully as the women dress, they talk very little about clothes. I was much struck by their culture—by the evidence that they had read far more and developed a more fastidious taste than most young English-women. Yet it is all mixed up with extraordinary naïvety.

The vivacity, the appearance, at least, of reality, the animation, the energy of American women delighted me. They are very sympathetic, too, in spite of a certain callousness which comes of regarding everything in life, even love, as "lots of fun." I did not think that they, or the men either, had much natural sense of beauty. They admire beauty in a curious way through their intellect. Nearly every American girl has a cast of the Winged Victory of the Louvre in her room. She makes it a point of her education to admire it.

There! I am beginning to generalise—the very thing I made a resolution to avoid. How silly to generalise about a country which embraces such extremes of climate as the sharp winter winds of Boston and New York and the warm winter winds of Florida which blow through palms and orange groves!

NOTES TO CHAPTER X

1. *The First American Tour*. Abbey, the impresario who persuaded Irving to visit America for the first time in 1883, made a clear profit of £50,000 out of the enterprise. The profit Irving made is not mentioned by any of the biographers, not even by Bram Stoker who as his business-manager must ha

Peut-être dans le regret de celle qui n'est plus, y-a-t-il une espèce de suggestion qui finit par amener sur nos traits des similitudes que nous avons d'ailleurs en puissance, et y-a-t-il surtout arrêt de notre activité plus particulièrement individuelle... que nous craignons pas, tant que vivait l'être bien-aimé, d'exercer, fût-ce à ses dépens, et qui contrebalançait le caractère que nous tenions exclusivement de lui.

Une fois qu'elle est morte, nous aurions scrupule à être autre, nous n'admirons plus que ce qu'elle était, ce que nous étions déjà, mais mêlé à autre chose, et ce que nous allons être désormais uniquement...

Enfin dans ce culte de regret pour nos morts, nous vouons une idolâtrie à ce qu'ils ont aimé.

There you have the explanation of the measure of success the Ellen Terry memorial has achieved during the four years which have passed since her death.

While the Memorial Committee, disappointed at the result of the appeal, which brought in only a little over £1,000 during 1929, accepted the situation, and with the exception of the Honorary Treasurer, Lady Maud Warrender, whose zeal never flagged, made no effort to devise some other means of raising money, Edy began carrying out the objects of the scheme in the only way she could, a makeshift way, imposed on her by her slender financial resources. By the summer of 1929, she had transformed the house into a memorial museum, displaying in two rooms the interesting theatre relics in Ellen Terry's collection, with additions from her own, and had arranged for the admission of visitors. The Barn, which one croaker on the Memorial Committee had come to see (for that he deserves an honourable mention, since some of his colleagues have never visited Smallhythe to this day), and pronounced impossible for the purposes of a theatre until at least £1,000 had been spent on its restoration and conversion, was ready for a performance on the first anniversary of Ellen Terry's death. There were holes in the thatched roof, gaps in the timbered walls; the audience, invited to take part in the commemoration of a great actress, sat on rough benches on a beaten earth floor. But the improvised stage, because it was improvised by a Craig, did not look like a makeshift. The programme had been hastily arranged, but it was of rare quality. Jean Sterling Mackinlay sang and Rae Robertson played with inspiration to the glorious memory of Ellen Terry. Edy's gallantry and devotion produced results. Visitors to Ellen Terry's humble shrine were deeply moved, and went away to talk of it to their friends. There has been a steady increase in the number of pilgrims every year. The Barn theatre has been improved by the addition of chairs presented by people to whom this part of the Memorial scheme particularly appealed. The roof has been re-thatched. The gaping

known the figures. It is improbable that they were dazzling, for Irving's expenses were enormous. He brought with him to America all the scenery and properties of his productions, as well as the entire company and staff from the Lyceum. Such a princely method of touring could not have been very profitable, but it had the effect of giving Henry Irving and Ellen Terry a position in America which they might never have attained by their acting alone. Their position in England was by this time one of great eminence. Before they left for America a farewell banquet was given to Irving by representative Englishmen of distinction at the old St James's Hall, a building which has long since vanished from Piccadilly. In 1883, such banquets were for men only; but women were graciously permitted to listen to post-prandial speeches from a gallery set apart for them in banquetting halls. Round this gallery at the St James's Hall, Ellen Terry, strangely excluded, according to modern ideas, from the dinner, moved after it was over, to the sound of the loudest cheers and applause of the evening. "A fairer vision than Ellen Terry, then at the zenith of her loveliness, cannot be imagined. She shone with no shallow sparkle or glitter, but with a steady radiance that filled the room, and had the peculiar quality of making everybody else invisible." (Graham Robertson)

2. *Sandbagging*. Writing in 1906, Ellen Terry obviously thought her vague notion in 1883 that she might be sandbagged in the street in America, utterly ridiculous. In 1932 it does not strike us like that.

3. *Stanford White*. Before Ellen Terry had finished her book *Stanford White* was murdered. She was in New York at the time of the trial of Harry Thaw. (1906)

4. The procedure I have followed up to now of giving a list of the parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by each chapter, cannot be applied either to this chapter or to Chapter XI in which the American tours are described. It is resumed after Chapter XII. The only new part which Ellen Terry ever played in America was Yolande in Laurence Irving's "Gode-froi and Yolande" in 1895.

would show. She guessed from the large number of letters from Bernard Shaw, found in her mother's archives after her death, that he might be able to contribute some of the letters that had inspired his, to her collection, and wrote, telling him of the volume she was planning. She threw out the suggestion that as a friend of her mother's, and as her most distinguished living correspondent, he was the man to write the preface. Bernard Shaw replied, on a postcard, that he had hundreds of letters from Ellen Terry, and that when he had looked them out he would bring them. He called at our flat shortly afterwards with his collection, neatly arranged in chronological order, and docketed. It was then that the possibility of publishing the complete Shaw-Terry correspondence was first discussed.

The plan appealed to Edy. She could not help seeing that her mother's letters would gain a great deal from being illuminated by Shaw's. Nor, being a practical person, was she indifferent to the fact that their addition, constituting a correspondence with very few parallels in literature, would mean the production of a book likely to have a far bigger circulation than the one she had contemplated. She had formed the opinion from reading Shaw's letters, which was confirmed when she read Ellen Terry's letters to him, that the correspondence was not one revealing those intimate secrets of the emotional life which ought to be protected from the public gaze. She knew that the only objection her mother had raised, when writing her autobiography, to the inclusion of other letters from Shaw than the one she selected for publication, was that there were references in them to Henry Irving, "which ought not to be published so soon after his death." Twenty-four years had now passed since Irving's death. Edy, who had loved and admired him, "this side idolatry," as much as anyone, was convinced moreover that, while individual letters from Shaw might contain severe criticism of Irving, the whole correspondence was a vindication of his character and genius, and a fresh confirmation of her mother's loyalty to him.

Edy would not however enter into negotiations for the publication of the correspondence without consulting her brother. The impression, created by Gordon Craig in his biography, that she was antagonistic to him, is very far from the truth. He had no more honest champion of his great talents, and she had always taken with great good humour his masculine contempt for her own. The copyright of her mother's letters was her property. She was not under the necessity of obtaining her brother's consent to the publication of the letters to Shaw, or of any others. But she desired his consent, for many reasons. One was that she did not want this literary monument to her mother to be the occasion of any undignified controversy. Her brother's notorious animosity to Shaw,

CHAPTER XI

AMERICA (*Continued*)

§ I

IT is only human to make comparison between American and English institutions, although they are likely to turn out as odious as the proverb says! The first institution in America that distressed me was the steam heat. It is far more manageable now than it was, both in hotels and theatres, because there are more individual heaters. But how I suffered from it at first I cannot describe! I used to feel dreadfully ill, and when we could not turn the heat off at the theatre, the plays always went badly. My voice was affected too. At Toledo once, it nearly went altogether. Then the next night, after a good fight for it, we got the theatre cooler, and the difference that it made to the play was extraordinary. I was in my best form, feeling well and jolly!

No wonder the Americans drink ice-water and wear very thin clothes indoors. Their rooms are hotter than ours ever are, even in the height of the summer—when we have a summer! But no wonder, either, that Americans in England shiver at our cold, draughty rooms. They are brought up in hot-houses.

If I did not like steam heat, I loved the ice which is such a feature at American meals. Everything is served on ice, and the ice-water, however pernicious the European may consider it as a drink, looks charming and cool in the hot rooms.

I liked the travelling; but then we travelled in a very princely fashion. The Lyceum company and the baggage occupied eight cars, and Henry's private parlour car was lovely. The only thing that we found was better understood in England, so far as railway travelling is concerned, was *privacy*. You may have a *private* car in America, but all the conductors on the train, and there is one to each car, can walk through it. So can any official, baggage man, or newsboy, who has the mind!

The "parlour car" in America is more luxurious than our first class, but you travel in it (if you have no "private" car) with thirty other people.

"What do you want to be private for?" asks an American, and you don't know how to answer, for you find that with them privacy means

concealment. For this reason, I believe, they dont have hedges or walls round their estates and gardens. "Why should we? We have nothing to hide!"

In the cars, as in the rooms at one's hotel, the "cuspidor" is always with you as a thing of beauty! When I first went to America the "Ladies' Entrance" to the hotel was really necessary, because the ordinary entrance was impassable! Since then very severe laws against spitting in public places have been passed, and there is a *great* improvement. But the habit, I suppose due to the dryness of the climate, or to the very strong cigars smoked, or to chronic catarrh, or to a feeling of independence—"This is a free country and I can spit if I choose!"—remains sufficiently disgusting to a stranger visiting the country.

The American voice is the one thing in the country that I find unbearable; yet the worst variety does not exist in many states. The Southern voice is very low in tone and soothing, like the "darky" voice. It is as different from Yankee as the Yorkshire burr is from the Cockney accent.

This question of accent is a very funny one. I had not been in America long when a friend said to me:

"We like your voice. You have so little English accent!"

This struck me as rather cool. Surely English should be spoken with an *English* accent, not with a French, German, or double-dutch one! Then I found that what they meant by an English accent was an English affectation of speech—a drawl with a tendency to "aw" and "ah" everything. They thought that every one in England, who did not miss out aspirates where they should be, and put them in where they should not be, talked of "the riva," "ma brothar," and so on. Their conclusion was, after all, quite as well founded as ours about *their* accent. The American intonation, with its freedom from violent emphasis, is, I think, rather pretty when the quality of the voice is sweet.

Of course the Americans would have their jokes about Henry's method of speech. Ristori followed us once in New York, and a newspaper man said he was not sure whether she or Mr Irving was the more difficult for an American to understand.

"He pronounces the English tongue as it is pronounced by no other man, woman or child," wrote the critic, and proceeded to give a phonetically spelled version of Irving's delivery of Shylock's speech to Antonio.

Wa thane, eit no eperes

Ah! um! yo ned m'elp

Ough! ough! Gaw too thane! Ha! um!

Yo com'n say

Ah! Shilok, um! ouch! we wode hev moanies!

diate publication impossible. But as it was clear that some day or other they would be published, and I had better leave a document to explain them, I wrote an explanation for posterity. This was entitled: "Preface to be attached to the Correspondence of Ellen Terry and Bernard Shaw, should it ever be published," and was marked "Very Private." I sent a proof of it to Gordon Craig and another to Edith Craig. It is now before the public as the preface to the correspondence. Gordon Craig and his family are none the worse for it; and I will give a penny to any one who can discover in it the faintest disparagement of his father, Edward Godwin, whom I never met, and whose production of a Greek play at the old Circus in Argyll Street many years ago, pleased me very much.

The effect on Edith Craig was that she made up her mind that the preface should be published as well as the letters. I was perplexed, and showed the proofs to a small court of honor, consisting of two persons, one of them a famous soldier, and the other a lady, the head of a religious house, much respected by both of us. Without the letters, the preface suggested to them only a correspondence that should not be published. I accepted their verdict; but Edith Craig remained unshaken. Presently legal questions arose. Ellen Terry's executors had to realize her estate for the benefit of Edith Craig, Gordon Craig and his children. My letters and Ellen Terry's copyrights were sold; and the assignee of the copyrights announced his intention of publishing Ellen Terry's letters by themselves if he could not induce me to consent to the publication of mine with them.

Under this pressure I consented to the publication of a limited edition at a high price, for the benefit of the Ellen Terry Memorial Institute which Edith Craig and Lady Maud Warrender were establishing at Smallhythe in Kent, and which could be financed by no other means. It was the preparation of this edition which led to my reading the correspondence as a whole for the first time; and it converted me at once to Edith Craig's opinion. I saw that she had been right all through, and that Gordon Craig's notion that the letters should have been destroyed appeared very much as if he had reproached King George for allowing his grandmother's letters to be given to the world.

When I make up my mind, I do not make it up by halves, and I agreed that my hesitations had been absurd, and that the limited edition should be followed by an ordinary unlimited trade edition at ordinary prices. But I made it a condition that Craig should be consulted, and he, swearing he would ne'er consent, consented, as has been seen. I proposed that he should write a preface; and he entertained this until he learnt that the proposal was suggested by me, whereupon he repudiated it with vehemence, declaring that it was a trap for him. He was treated by me throughout with inhumanly scrupulous correctness, and by his sister with anxious consideration; for she made me omit everything written by me that could possibly wound him.

To sum it all up, I don't think the public will be misled by Craig's grouch against me. After all, I wounded that sacred thing, a boy's idolatry of the first great actor he ever saw. And his psychopathic hatred of 'the great

I wonder if this American newspaper man stopped to think how *his* delivery of the same speech would look in print! As for the ejaculations, the interjections and grunts with which Henry interlarded the text, they often helped to reveal the meaning of Shakespeare to his audience—a meaning which many a perfect elocutionist has left perfectly obscure. The use of “m’ ” or “me” for “my” has often been hurled in my face as a reproach, but I never contracted “my” without good reason. I had a line in “Olivia” which I began by delivering as—

My sorrows and my shame are my own.

Then I saw that the “mys” sounded comic and abbreviated the two first ones into “me’s.”

§ 2

It has been said that the Americans did not like Irving as an actor, and that they only accepted him as a manager, that he triumphed in New York as he had done in London, through his lavish spectacular effects. This is all moonshine. Henry made his first appearance in “The Bells,” his second in “Charles I,” his third in “Louis XI.” By that time he had conquered, and without the aid of anything at all notable in the mounting of the plays. It was not until we did “The Merchant of Venice” that he gave the Americans anything of a “production.”

My first appearance in America in Shakespeare was as Portia, and I could not help feeling pleased by my success. A few weeks later I played Ophelia at Philadelphia. It is in Shakespeare that I have been best liked in America, and I consider that Beatrice was the part which met with most enthusiasm there.

During our first tour we visited in succession New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Chicago, Cincinnati, St Louis, Detroit, and Toronto. To most of these places we paid return visits.

“To what do you attribute your success, Mr Irving?”

“To my acting,” was the simple reply.

We never had poor houses except in Baltimore and St Louis. Our journey to Baltimore was made in a blizzard. They were clearing the snow before us all the way from New Jersey, and we took forty-two hours to reach Baltimore! The bells of trains before us and behind us sounded very alarming. We opened in Baltimore on Christmas Day. The audience was wretchedly small, but the poor things who were there had left their warm firesides to drive or tramp through the slush of melting

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snow, and each one who managed to reach the theatre was worth a hundred on an ordinary night.

At the hotel I put up holly and mistletoe, and produced from my trunks a real Christmas pudding that my mother had made. We had it for supper, and it was very good.

It never does to repeat an experiment. Next year at Pittsburgh my little son Teddy brought me out another pudding from England. For once we were in an uncomfortable hotel, and the Christmas dinner was deplorable. It began with *burned hare soup*.

"It seems to me," said Henry, "that we aren't going to get anything to eat, but we'll make up for it by drinking!"

He had brought his own wine out with him from England, and the company took him at his word and *did* make up for it!

"Never mind!" I said, as the soup was followed by worse and worse. "There's my pudding!"

It came on blazing, and looked superb. Henry tasted it.

"Very odd," he said, "but I think this is a camphor pudding."

He said it so politely, as if he might easily be mistaken!

My maid in England had packed the pudding with my furs! It simply reeked of camphor.

So we had to dine on Henry's wine and L. F. Austin's wit. This brilliant man, now dead, acted for many years as Henry's secretary, and one of his gifts was the happy knack of hitting off people's peculiarities in rhyme. This dreadful Christmas dinner at Pittsburgh was enlivened by a collection of such rhymes, which Mr. Austin called a "Lycæum Christmas Play."

Every one roared with laughter until it came to the verse of which he was the victim, when suddenly he found the fun rather poor!

The first verse was spoken by Loveday, who announces that the "Governor" has a new play which is "*Wonderful*", a great word of Loveday's.

George Alexander replies:

But I say, Loveday, have I got a part in it,
That I can wear a cloak in and look smart in it?
Not that I care a fig for gaudy show, dear boy—
But juveniles must *look* well, don't you know, dear boy.
And shall I lordly hall and tuns of claret own?
And may I murmur love in dulcet baritone?
Tell me at least, this simple fact of it—
Can I beat Terriss hollow in one act of it? 1

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Once when Allen was rehearsing the supers in the Church Scene in "Much Ado about Nothing," we overheard him "show the sense" in Shakespeare like this:

"This 'Ero let me tell you is a perfect lady, a nice, innocent young thing, and when the feller she's engaged to calls 'er an 'approved wanton,' you naturally claps yer 'ands to yer swords. A wanton is a kind of —well, you know she ain't what she ought to be!"

Allen would then proceed to read the part of Claudio:

... not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

Seven or eight times the supers clapped their "'ands to their swords" without giving Allen satisfaction.

"No, no, no, that's not a bit like it, not a bit! If any of your sisters was 'ere and you 'eard me call 'er a —, would yer stand gapin' at me as if this was a bloom-in' tea party?"

Louis Austin's little "Lyceum Play" was presented to me with a silver tea-service, a souvenir from the gentlemen of the company, and ended up with the following pretty lines spoken by Katie Brown, a clever little girl who played all the small pages' parts at this time:

Although I'm but a little page,
 Who waits for Portia's kind behest,
 Mine is the part upon this stage
 To tell the plot you have not guessed.
 Dear lady, oft in Belmont's hall,
 Whose mistress is so sweet and fair,
 Your humble slaves would gladly fall
 Upon their knees, and praise you there.
 To offer you this little gift,
 Dear Portia, now we crave your leave,
 And let it have the grace to lift
 Our hearts to yours this Christmas eve.
 And so we pray that you may live
 Thro' many, many, happy years,
 And feel what you so often give—
 The joy that is akin to tears!

How nice of Louis Austin! It quite made up for my mortification over

the camphor pudding!

Pittsburgh has been called "hell with the lid off," and other insulting names. I have always thought it beautiful, especially at night when its furnaces make it look like a city of flame. The lovely park that the city

has made on the heights that surround it is a lesson to Birmingham, Sheffield, and our other black towns. George Alexander said that Pittsburgh reminded him of his native town of Sheffield. "Had he said Birmingham, now instead of Sheffield," wrote a Pittsburgh newspaper man, "he would have touched our tender spot exactly. As it is, we can be as cheerful as the Chicago man was who boasted that his sweetheart 'came pretty near calling him "honey,"' when in fact she had called him 'old Beeswax!'"

When I played Ophelia for the first time in Chicago, I played the part better than I had ever played it before, and I don't believe I ever played it so well again. *Why*, it is almost impossible to say. I had heard a good deal of the crime of Chicago, that the people were a rough, murderous, sand-bagging crew. I ran on to the stage in the mad scene, and never have I felt such sympathy! This frail wraith, this poor demented thing, could hold them in the hollow of her hand... It was splendid! "How long can I hold them?" I thought: "For ever!" Then I laughed. That was the best Ophelia laugh of my life.

At the risk of being accused of indiscriminate flattery I must say that I liked *all* the American cities. Every one of them has a joke at the expense of the others. They talk in New York of a man who lost both his sons—"One died and the other went to live in Philadelphia." Pittsburgh is the subject of endless jibes, and Chicago is "the limit." To me, indeed, it seemed "the limit"—of the industry, energy, and enterprise of man. In 1812 this vast city was only a frontier post, Fort Dearborn. In 1871 the town that first rose on these great plains was burned to the ground. The growth of the present Chicago began when I was a grown woman. I have celebrated my jubilee. Chicago will not do that for another fifteen years!

I never visited the stock-yards. Somehow I had no curiosity to see a live pig turned in fifteen minutes into ham, sausages, hair-oil, and the binding for a Bible! I had some dread of being made sad by the spectacle of so much slaughter—of hating the Chicago of the "abattoir" as much as I had loved the Chicago of the Lake with the white buildings of the World's Fair shining on it, the Chicago built on piles in splendid isolation in the middle of the prairie, the Chicago of Marshall Field's beautiful palace of a store, the Chicago of my dear friends, the Chicago of my son's first appearance on the stage! Was it not a Chicago man who wrote of my boy, tending the roses in the stage garden in "Eugene Aram," that he was "a most beautiful lad"!

His eyes are full of sparkle, his smile is a ripple over his face, and his laugh is as cheery and natural as a bird's song... This Joey is Miss Ellen Terry's son, and the apple of her eye. On this Wednesday night, January

14, 1885, he spoke his first lines upon the stage. His mother has high hopes of this child's dramatic future. He has the instinct and the soul of art in him. Already the theatre is his home. His postures and his playfulness with the gardener, his natural and graceful movements, had been the subject of much drilling, of study and practice. He acquitted himself beautifully and received the wise congratulations of his mother, of Mr. Irving, and of the company.

That is the nicest newspaper notice I have ever read! At Chicago I made my first speech. The Haverley Theatre, at which we first appeared in 1884, was altered and rechristened the "Columbia" in 1885. I was called upon for a speech after the special performance in honour of the occasion, consisting of scenes from "Charles I.," "Louis XI," "The Merchant of Venice," and "The Bells," had come to an end. I think it must be the shortest speech on record:

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have been asked to christen your beautiful theatre. "Hail Columbia!"

§ 3

When we acted in Brooklyn we used to stay in New York and drive over that wonderful bridge every night. There were no trolley cars on it then. I shall never forget how it looked in winter, with the snow and ice on it—a gigantic trellis of dazzling white, as incredible as a dream. The old stone bridges were works of *art*. This bridge, woven of iron and steel for a length of over 500 yards, and hung high in the air over the water so that great ships can pass beneath it, is the work of *science*. It looks as if it had been built by some power, not by men at all.

It was during our week at Brooklyn in 1885 that Henry was ill, too ill to act for four nights. Alexander played Benedick, and got through it wonderfully well. Then old Mr Mead did (*did* is the word) Shylock. There was no intention behind his words or what he did.

I had such a funny batch of letters on my birthday that year. "Dear, sweet Miss Terry, etc., etc. Will you give me a piano?" "I etc., etc. Another lovely letter of other: "Dear Ellen. Come to Jesus. Mary." Another, a lovely letter of thanks from a poor woman in the most ghastly distress, and lastly an offer of a *two years' engagement* in America. There was a simple coming in for one woman acting at Brooklyn on her birthday!

Brooklyn is as sure of a laugh in New York as the mother-in-law in a London music hall. "All cities begin by being lonesome," a comedian explained, "and Brooklyn has never gotten over it." My only complaint against Brooklyn was that they would not take Fussie in at the hotel there. Fussie, during these early American tours, was still *my dog*. Later on he became Henry's. He had his affections

alienated by a course of chops, tomatoes, strawberries, asparagus, biscuits soaked in champagne, and a beautiful fur rug of his very own presented by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts!

How did I come by Fussie? I went to Newmarket with Rosa Corder, whom Whistler painted. She was one of those plain-beautiful women who are so far more attractive than some of the pretty ones. She had wonderful hair—like a fair, pale veil, a white, waxen face, and a very good figure; and she wore very odd clothes. She had a studio in Southampton Row, and another at Newmarket where she went to paint horses. I went to Cambridge once and drove back with her across the heath to her studio.

"How wonderfully different are the expressions on terriers' faces," I said to her, looking at a painting of hers of a fox-terrier pup. "That's the only sort of dog I should like to have."

"That one belonged to Fred Archer," Rosa Corder said. "I daresay he could get you one like it."

We went out to find Archer. Curiously enough I had known the famous jockey at Harpenden when he was a little boy, and I believe used to come round with vegetables.

"I'll send you a dog, Miss Terry, that wont be any trouble. He's got a very good head, a first-rate tail, stuck in splendidly, but his legs are too long. He'd follow you to America!"

Prophetic words! On one of our departures for America, Fussie was left behind by mistake at Southampton. He could not get across the Atlantic, but he did the next best thing. He found his way back from there to his own theatre in the Strand, London!

Fred Archer sent him originally to the stage-door at the Lyceum. The man who brought him out from there to my house in Earl's Court said:

"I'm afraid he gives tongue, Miss. He dont like music anyway. There was a band at the bottom of your road, and he started hollering."

We were at luncheon when Fussie made his first entry into the family circle, and I very quickly saw his *stomach* was his fault. He had a great dislike to "Charles I"; we could never make out why. Perhaps it was because Henry wore armour in one act—and Fussie may have barked his shins against it. Perhaps it was the firing off of the guns; but more probably it was because the play once got him into trouble. As a rule Fussie had the most wonderful sense of the stage, and at rehearsal would skirt the edge of it, but never cross it. But at Brooklyn one night when we were playing "Charles I"—the last act, and that most pathetic part of it where Charles is taking a last farewell of his wife and children—Fussie, perhaps excited by his run over the bridge from New York, sud-

denly bounded on to the stage! The good children who were playing Princess Mary and Prince Henry didn't even smile; the audience remained solemn, but Henry and I nearly went into hysterics. Fussie knew directly that he had done wrong. He lay down on his stomach, then rolled over on his back, whimpering an apology—while carpenters kept on whistling and calling to him from the wings. The children took him up to the window at the back of the scene, and he stayed there cowering between them until the end of the play.

America seems to have been always fatal to Fussie. Another time when Henry and I were playing in some charity performance in which John Drew and Maude Adams were also acting, he disgraced himself again. Henry having "done his bit" and put on hat and coat to leave the theatre, Fussie thought the end of the performance must have come; the stage had no further sanctity for him, and he ran across it to the stage door barking! John Drew and Maude Adams were playing "A Pair of Lunatics." Maude Adams, who was sitting looking into the fire at the moment, did not see Fussie, and was amazed to hear John Drew departing madly from the text:

Is this a dog I see before me,
His tail towards my hand?
Come, let me clutch thee.

She began to think that he had really gone mad!

When Fussie first came, Charlie was still alive, and I have often gone into Henry's dressing-room and seen the two dogs curled up in both the available chairs, Henry *standing* while he made up, rather than disturb them!

When Charlie died, Fussie had Henry's idolatry all to himself. I have caught them often sitting quietly opposite each other at Grafton Street, just adoring each other! Occasionally Fussie would thump his tail on the ground to express his pleasure.

Wherever we went in America the hotel people wanted to get rid of the dog. In the paper they had it that Miss Terry asserted that Fussie was a little terrier, while the hotel people regarded him as a pointer, and funny caricatures were drawn of a very big me with a very tiny dog, and a very tiny me with a dog the size of an elephant! Henry often walked straight out of an hotel where an objection was made to Fussie. If he wanted to stay, he had recourse to strategy. At Detroit the manager of the hotel said that dogs were against the rules. Being very tired Henry let Fussie go to the stables for the night, and sent Walter to look after him. The next morning he sent for the manager.

"Yours is a very old-fashioned hotel, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir, very old and ancient."

"Got a good chef? I didnt think much of the supper last night; but still—the beds are comfortable enough. I am afraid you dont like animals?"

"Yes, sir, in their proper place."

"It's a pity," said Henry meditatively, "because you happen to be overrun by rats!"

"Sir, you must have made a mistake. Such a thing couldnt—"

"Well, I couldnt pass another night here without my dog," Henry interrupted. "But there are, I suppose, other hotels?"

"If it will be any comfort to you to have your dog with you, sir, do by all means, but I assure you he'll catch no rats here."

"I'll be on the safe side," said Henry calmly.

And so it was settled. That very night Fussie supped off, not rats, but terrapin and other delicacies in Henry's private sitting-room.

After that long separation, the year Fussie was left behind at Southampton, Henry naturally thought that the dog would go nearly mad with joy when he saw him again. He described the meeting in a letter to me.

My dear Fussie gave me a terrible shock on Sunday night. When we got in, J——, Hatton, and I dined at the Café Royal. I told Walter to bring Fussie there. He did, and Fussie burst into the room while the waiter was cutting some mutton, when, what d'ye think—one bound at me—another instantaneous bound at the mutton, and from the mutton nothing would get him until he'd got his plateful.

Oh, what a surprise it was indeed! He never now will leave my side, my legs, or my presence, but I cannot but think, alas, of that seductive piece of mutton!

Poor Fussie! He met his death through the same weakness. It was at Manchester, I think. A carpenter had thrown down his coat with a ham sandwich in the pocket, over an open trap on the stage. Fussie, nosing and nudging after the sandwich, fell through and was killed instantly. When they brought up the dog after the performance, every man took his hat off... Henry was not told until the end of the play.

He took it so very quietly that I was frightened, and said to his son Laurence who was on that tour:

"Do let's go to his hotel and see how he is."

We drove there and found him sitting eating his supper with the poor dead Fussie, who would never eat supper any more, curled up in his rug on the sofa. Henry was talking to the dog exactly as if it were alive. The next day he took Fussie back in the train with him to London, covered with a coat. He is buried in the dogs' cemetery, Hyde Park.

At Niagara William Terriss slipped and nearly lost his life. At night sea give me rest.

unrest, just as the long low lines of my Sussex marshland near Winchel- merely marvellous, has always repelled me. The great cañons give me was wonderful, but not beautiful any more. The merely stupendous, the in *beauty*, with pits of colour in its waters, no one colour definite. All side of all this greatness to learn to love it. Only once did I catch Niagara falls. I'm glad I went again in other lights—but one should live by the noon tide, that garish cruel time of day, when I first came in sight of the all hard lines are blurred, how soft, how different, everything is! It was to be at their plainest. In the evening, when the shadows grow long and most height of the day's journey," most of Nature's sights appear to me the great flow of it. But at twelve o'clock, with the "sun upon the top- at it. I wouldn't go alone again, for I felt queer and wanted to follow it, and I listened—and at last it became dreadful and I was *frightened* tiful. I got away by myself from my party, and looked and looked at time I saw the great falls I thought it all more wonderful than beau- I HAVE never been to America yet without going to Niagara. The first

§ 4

The place is now given up to the rats—all light cut off, and only Barry¹ and a fireman left. Everything of mine I've moved away, including the Cat

panionship. In 1902, when he left the theatre for good, he wrote to me: always sat night after night in the same place, and Henry liked its com- that Henry was not going to resent it! From that night onwards the cat take it. But when Walter was sent out to buy some meat for it, we saw and sat on Fussie's cushion! No one knew how the "Governor" would cat, who had never been near the room in Fussie's lifetime, came down dog in his dressing-room. Then an odd thing happened. The wardrobe every one was anxious and distressed, knowing how he would miss the The first time that Henry went to the Lyceum after Fussie's death, of contrasts!

—then barked suddenly and whispered again! Such a lesson in the law His look, his way of walking! He *sang*, whispered eloquently and low We used to get hints how to get this and that from watching Fussie! of what he felt about it, but it was easy to know. stant companion. When he died, Henry was really alone. He never spoke His death made an enormous difference to Henry. Fussie was his con-

when he appeared as Bassanio, he shrugged his shoulders, lowered his eyelids, and said to me—

"Nearly gone, dear,"—he would call everybody "dear"—"But Bill's luck! Tempus fugit!"

What tempus fugit had to do with it, I don't quite know!

When we were first in Canada I tobogganed at Rosedale. I should say it was like flying! The start! Amazing! "Farewell to this world," I thought, as I felt my breath go. Then I shut my mouth, opened my eyes, and found myself at the bottom of the hill in a jiffy—"over hill, over dale, thorough bush, thorough briar!" I rolled right out of the toboggan when we stopped. A very nice Canadian man was my escort, and he helped me up the hill afterwards. I didn't like *that* part of the affair quite so much.

Henry Irving would not come, much to my disappointment. He said that quick motion through the air always gave him the ear-ache. He had to give up swimming (his old Cornish Aunt Penberthy told me he delighted in swimming as a boy) because it gave him most violent pains in the ear.

§ 5

PHILADELPHIA, as I first knew it, was the most old-world place I saw in America, except perhaps Salem. Its red-brick side-walks, the trees in the streets, the low houses with their white marble cuffs and collars, the pretty design of the place, all give it a character of its own. The people, too, have a character of their own. They dress, or at least *did* dress, very quietly. This was the only sign of their Quaker origin, except a very fastidious taste—in plays as in other things.

Mrs Gillespie, the great-grandchild of Benjamin Franklin, was one of my earliest Philadelphia friends—a splendid type of the independent woman, a bit of a martinet, but immensely full of kindness and humour. She had a word to say in all Philadelphia matters. It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast to Mrs Gillespie of Philadelphia than Mrs Fields of Boston, that other great American lady whom to know is a liberal education.

Mrs Fields reminded me of Lady Tennyson, Mrs Tom Taylor, and Miss Hogarth (Dickens's sister-in-law) all rolled into one. Her house is full of relics of the past. There is a portrait of Dickens as a young man with long hair. He had a feminine face in those days, for all its strength. Hard by is a sketch of Keats by Severn, with a lock of the poet's hair. Opposite is a head of Thackeray, with a note in his hand-writing fastened below. "Good-bye, Mrs Fields; good-bye, my dear Fields; good-bye to all. I go home."

Thackeray left Boston abruptly because a sudden desire to see his children had assailed him at Christmas time!

As you sit in Mrs Fields' spacious room overlooking the Bay, you realise suddenly that before you ever came into it, Dickens and Thackeray were both here, that this beautiful old lady who so kindly smiles on you has smiled on them and on many other great men of letters long since dead. It is here that they seem most alive. This is the house where the culture of Boston seems no fad to make a joke about, but a rare and delicate reality.

This—and Fen Court, the home of that wonderful woman Mrs Jack Gardiner, who represents the present worship of beauty in Boston as Mrs Fields represents its former worship of literary men. Fen Court is a house of enchantment, a palace, and Mrs Gardiner is like a great princess in it. She has "great possessions" indeed, but her most rare one, to my mind, is her beautiful voice, even though I remember her garden by moonlight with the fountain playing, her books and her pictures, the Sargent portrait of herself presiding over one of the most splendid of those splendid rooms, where everything great in old art and new art is represented. What a portrait it is! Some one once said of Sargent that "behind the individual he finds the real, and behind the real, a whole social order."

He has painted "Mrs Jack" in a tight-fitting black dress with no ornament but her world-famed pearl necklace round her waist, and on her shoes rubies like drops of blood. The daring, intellectual face seems to say: "I have acquired everything that is worth acquiring, through the energy and effort and labour of the country in which I was born."

Mrs Gardiner's house filled me with admiration, but if I want rest and peace I just think of the houses of Mrs James Fields and Oliver Wendell Holmes. He was another personage in Boston when I first went there. Oh, the visits I inflicted on him—yet he always seemed pleased to see me, the cheery, kind man. It was generally winter when I called on him. At once it was "four feet upon a fender!" Four feet upon a fender was his idea of happiness, he told me, during one of these lengthy visits of mine to his house in Beacon Street.

He came to see us in "Much Ado about Nothing" and, next day sent me some little volumes of his work with a lovely inscription on the front page. I miss him very much when I go to Boston now.

In New York, how much I miss Mrs Beecher I could never say. The Beechers were the most wonderful pair. What an actor he would have made! He read scenes from Shakespeare to Henry and me at luncheon one day. He sat next to his wife, and they held hands nearly all the while; I thought of that time when the great preacher was tried, and all

through the trial his wife showed the world her faith in his innocence by sitting by his side and holding his hand.

He was indeed a great preacher. I have a little faded card in my possession now: "Mrs Henry W. Beecher." "Will ushers of Plymouth Church please seat the bearer in the Pastor's pew." And in the Pastor's pew I sat, listening to that magnificent bass-viol voice with its persuasive low accent, its torrential scorn! After the sermon I went to the Beechers' home. Mr Beecher sat with a saucer of uncut gems by him on the table. He ran his hand through them from time to time, held them up to the light, admiring them and speaking of their beauty and colour as eloquently as an hour before he had spoken of sin and death and redemption.

He asked me to choose a stone, and I selected an aquamarine. He had it splendidly mounted for me in Venetian style to wear in "The Merchant of Venice." Once when he was ill, he told me, his wife had some few score of his jewels set up in lead—a kind of small stained-glass window—and hung up opposite his bed. "It did me more good than the doctor's visits," he said.

Mrs Beecher was very remarkable. She had a way of lowering her head and looking at you with a strange intentness, gravely, kindly, and quietly. At her husband she looked a world of love, of faith, of undying devotion. She was fond of me, although I was told she disliked women generally and had been brought up to think all actresses children of Satan. Obedience to the iron rules which had always surrounded her had endowed her with extraordinary self-control. She would not allow herself ever to feel heat or cold, and could stand any pain or discomfort without a word of complaint.

She told me once that when she and her sister were children, a friend had given them some lovely bright blue silk, and as the material was so fine they thought they would have it made up a little more smartly than was usual in their sombre religious home. In spite of their father's hatred of gaudy clothes, they ventured on a little "V" at the neck, hardly showing more than the throat; but still, in a household where blue silk itself was a crime, it was a bold venture. They put on the dresses for the first time for five o'clock dinner, stole downstairs with trepidation, rather late, and took their seats as usual one on each side of their father. He was eating soup and never looked up. The little sisters were relieved. He was not going to say anything.

No, he was not going to say anything, but suddenly he took a ladleful of the hot soup and dashed it over the neck of one sister; another ladleful followed quickly on the neck of the other.

"Oh, father, you've burned my neck!"

As a woman off the stage Ada Rehan was even more wonderful than as a shrew on. She had a touch of dignity, of nobility, of beauty, rather like Eleonora Duse's. The mouth and the formation of the eye were lovely. Her guilelessness of make-up off the stage was so attractive! She used to come in to a supper party with a lovely shining face which

that no one in the audience sees through it!

great comedians, that you must not pretend to be serious so sincerely to do the part. She had such shy, demure fun. She understood, like all exclaim, not explain! Directly she came on I knew how she was going above all, her Katharine in "The Taming of the Shrew"! I can only Wife, her Helena, her performance in "The Railroad of Love"! And Barrymore's when Miss Ethel is speaking very nicely—her smiles and dimples, and provocative, inviting coquetry. Her Rosalind, her Country splendid high comedy! Then the charm of her voice—a little like Ethel The audacious, superb, quaint, Irish creature! Never have I seen such pany and before she had played in the classics and won enduring fame. I did know her for what she was, even in that brilliant "all-star" com- or any rubbish of that kind; the public were already mad about her, but on the stage." It was Ada Rehan! Now of course I didn't "discover" her company who is the most lovely, humorous darling I have ever seen enchantment. I wrote to Mr Daly and said: "You've got a girl in your American acting had reached. My first night at Daly's was a night of The Daly players were a revelation to me of the pitch of excellence which

§ 6

My DARLING NELLIE,—

You cannot know how it soothes my extreme heart-loneliness to receive a token of remembrance, and word of cheer from those I have faithfully loved, and who knew and revered my husband. . . . Ellen Terry is very sweet as Ellaline, but dearer far as my Nellie.

"Oh, father, you've spoiled my dress!"

"Oh, father, why did you do that?"

"I thought you might be cold," said the severe father significantly and malevolently.

That a woman who had been brought up like this should form a friendship with me naturally caused a good deal of talk. But what did she care! She remained my true friend until her death, and wrote to me constantly when I was in England—such loving, wise letters, full of charity and simple faith. In 1889, after her husband's death, I wrote to her and sent my picture, and she replied:

scorned a powder puff. The only thing one missed was the red hair which seemed such a part of her on the stage.

Here is a dear letter from the dear, written in 1890:

MY DEAR MISS TERRY,—

Of course the first thing I was to do when I reached Paris was to write and thank you for your lovely red feathers. One week is gone. Today it rains and I am compelled to stay at home, and at last I write. I thought you had forgotten me and my feathers long ago. So imagine my delight when they came at the very end. I liked it so. It seemed as if I lived all the time in your mind: and they came as a good-bye.

I saw but little of you, but in that little I found no change. That was gratifying to me, for I am over-sensitive, and would never trouble you if you had forgotten me. How I shall prize those feathers—Henry Irving's, presented by Ellen Terry to me for my Rosalind Cap. I shall wear them once and then put them by as treasures. Thank you so much for the pretty words you wrote me about "As You Like It." I was hardly fit on that matinee. The great excitement I went through during the London season almost killed me. I am going to try and rest, but I fear my nerves and heart wont let me.

You must try and read between the lines all I feel. I am sure you can if any one ever did, but I cannot put into words my admiration for you—and that comes from deep down in my heart. Good-bye, with all good wishes for your health and success.

I remain
Yours most affectionately,
ADA REHAN.

I wish I could just once have played with Ada Rehan. When Mr Tree could not persuade Mrs Kendal to come and play in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" a second time, I hoped that Ada Rehan would come and rollick with me as Mrs Ford—but it was not to be.

Mr Daly himself interested me greatly. He was an excellent manager, a man in a million. But he had no artistic sense. His productions of Shakespeare at Daly's were really bad from the pictorial point of view. But what pace and ensemble he got from his company!

John Drew, the famous son of a famous mother, was another Daly player whom I loved. With what loyalty he supported Ada Rehan! He never played for his own hand but for the good of the piece. His mother, Mrs John Drew, had the same quiet methods as Mrs Alfred Wigan. Everything that she did told. I saw Mrs Drew play Mrs Malaprop, and it was a lesson to people who overact. Her daughter, Georgie Drew, Ethel Barrymore's mother, was also a charming actress. Maurice Barrymore was a brilliantly clever actor. Little Ethel, as I still call her, though she is a big "star," is carrying on the family traditions. She

ought to play "Lady Teazle." She may take it from me that she would make a great success in it.

During my more recent tours in America Maude Adams is the actress of whom I have seen most, and "to see her is to love her!" In "The Little Minister" and in "Quality Street" I think she is at her best, but above all parts she herself is most adorable. She is just worshipped in America, and has an extraordinary effect—an *educational* effect upon all American girls.

I never saw Mary Anderson act. That seems a strange admission, but during her reign at the Lyceum Theatre, which she rented from Henry Irving, I was in America, and another time when I might have seen her act I was very ill and ordered abroad. I have, however, had the great pleasure of meeting her, and she has done me many little kindnesses. Hearing her praises sung on all sides, and her beauties spoken of everywhere, I was particularly struck by her modest evasion of publicity off the stage. I personally know her only as a most beautiful woman—as kind as beautiful—constantly working for her religion—*always* kind, a good daughter, a good wife, a good woman.

She cheered me before I first sailed for America by saying that her people would like me.

"Since seeing you in Portia and Leticia," she wrote, "I am convinced you will take America by storm." Certainly *she* took *England* by storm! But she abandoned her triumphs almost as soon as they were gained. They never made her happy, she once told me, and I could understand her better than most, since I had had success too, and knew that it did not mean happiness. I have a letter from her, written from St Raphael soon after her marriage. It is nice to think that she is just as happy now as she was then—that she made no mistake when she left the stage, where she had such a brief and brilliant career.

GRAND HOTEL DE VALESCURE,
ST RAPHAEL, FRANCE.

DEAR MISS TERRY,—

I am saying all kinds of fine things about your beautiful work in my book—which will appear shortly; but I cannot remember the name of the small part you made so attractive in the "Lyons' Mail." It was the first one I had seen you in, and I wish to write my delightful impression of it. Will you be so very kind as to tell me the name of your character and the two Mr Irving acted so wonderfully in that play?

There is a brilliant blue sea before my windows, with purple mountains as a background and silver-topped olives and rich green pines in the middle distance. I wish you could drop down upon us in this golden land for a few days' holiday from your weary work.

I would like to tell you what a big darling my husband is, and how perfectly happy he makes my life—but there's no use trying.

The last time we met I promised you a photo—here it is! One of my latest! And wont you send me one of yours in private dress? DO!

Forgive me for troubling you, and believe me your admirer

MARY ANDERSON DE NAVARRO.

Henry and I were so fortunate as to gain the friendship and approval of Dr Hórace Howard Furness, perhaps the finest Shakespearean scholar in America, and editor of the "Variorum Shakespeare," which Henry considered the best of all editions—"the one which counts." It was in Boston, I think, that I disgraced myself at one of Dr Furness's lectures. He was discussing "As You Like It" and Rosalind, and proving with much elaboration that English in Shakespeare's time was pronounced like a broad country dialect, and that Rosalind spoke Warwickshire! A little girl who was sitting in the row in front of me had lent me her copy of the play a moment before, and now, absorbed in Dr Furness's argument, I forgot the book wasn't mine and began scrawling controversial notes in it with my very thick and blotty fountain pen.

"Give me back my book! Give me my book!" screamed the little girl. "How dare you write in my book!" She began to cry with rage.

Her mother tried to hush her up: "Dont, darling. Be quiet! It's Miss Ellen Terry."

"I don't care! She's spoilt my book!"

I am glad to say that when the little girl understood, she forgave me; and the spoilt book is treasured very much by a tall Boston young lady of eighteen who has replaced the child of seven years ago!

§ 7

In November, 1901, I wrote in my diary: "*Philadelphia*.—Supper at Henry's. Jefferson there, sweeter and more interesting than ever—and younger."

Dear Joe Jefferson—actor, painter, courteous gentleman, *profound* student of Shakespeare! When the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy was raging in America (it really *did* rage there!) Jefferson wrote the most delicious doggerel about it. He ridiculed the Bacon fanatics, and his ridicule was the more effective because it was barbed with erudition.

He said that when I first came into the box to see him as "Rip" he thought I did not like him, because I fidgeted and rustled and moved my place, as is my wicked way. "But I'll get her, and I'll hold her," he said to himself. I was held indeed—enthralled.

In manner Jefferson was a little like Norman Forbes-Robertson. Per-

eyes! What a look of the everlasting the Chinese have! "We have been before you—we shall be after you," they seem to say.

Just as we were getting interested in the play, the interpreter rose and hurried us out. Something that was not for the ears of women was being said, but we did not know it!

The chief incident of the fifth American tour was our production at Chicago of Laurence Irving's one-act play "Godefroi and Yolande." I regard that little play as an inspiration. By instinct the young author did everything right. The Chicago folk, in spite of the unpleasant theme of the play, recognised the genius of it, and received it splendidly.

In 1901 I was ill, and hated the parts I was playing in America. The Lyceum company was not what it had been. Everything was changed.

In 1907—only the other day—I toured in America for the first time on my own account—playing modern plays for the first time. I made new friends and found my old ones still faithful. This tour was a momentous one for me, because at Pittsburgh I was married for the third time, and married to an American. My marriage was my own affair, but very few people seemed to think so, and I was overwhelmed with enquiries, kind, and otherwise. Kindness and loyalty won the day.

NOTES TO CHAPTER XI

1. *Irving's Pronunciation.* The accusation that Irving could not speak English as it ought to be spoken was not confined to America. His pronunciation was criticised severely in England throughout his career, and was a stumbling block to some of his most devout admirers. There is an interesting defence of it in Gordon Craig's biographical study of Irving. Craig's case for Irving's English rests on its striking resemblance to Chaucer's English. "This is the old English speech, and Irving brought back to us something of the ripe old sounds."

2. *Dr Furness.* The son of this distinguished American scholar, Henry Howard Furness, who died only a short time ago, inherited, like many of the children of Ellen Terry's first friends and admirers in America, his father's enthusiastic appreciation of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry as interpreters of Shakespeare. During a visit to England after her death, the younger Furness learned from her daughter of the failure of efforts to rouse the interest of the survivors among her hosts of American friends in the proposed memorial to her at Smallhythe. Surprised, and rather shocked, he promised to do all he could on his return to get into touch with people to whom he knew Ellen Terry was still an enchanting memory. His first move was to write to some prominent men, who in their youth had, like him, been present at a luncheon party at Harvard, given by one of the college clubs in Ellen Terry's honour. The sequel to this appeal was that Mr J. Pierpont Morgan, who had not forgotten that joyous occasion, sent a cheque for £250 to the Ellen Terry

Memorial Fund. Mr Furness died soon after his happy thought had had this happy result.

3. *Godetroi and Yolande*. The American performances were the only public ones ever accorded to Laurence Irving's play, but in 1915 Edith Craig produced it in London under the auspices of the Pioneer Players, a Sunday play-producing Society, complimented by Bernard Shaw in a note in the Shaw-Terry correspondence on "having done more for the theatrical vanguard than any other of the comic theatres."

Laurence Irving's gratitude to Ellen Terry for her keen interest in "Godetroi and Yolande" is expressed in a letter written shortly after he had read the play to her:

I cannot tell you how deeply I felt all your generous enthusiasm over my play. Encouragement such as you give me will spur me on to renewed efforts, so that I may hope to merit it again. I will have another copy of the play got ready, and then I will send it to you for the comments you so kindly offered to make. That copy will then be more valuable for your comments than in itself it could ever hope to be. I do not know in what words to tell you how honoured I feel at such an offer from the first of English actresses.

After Laurence Irving gave up diplomacy for which he had been educated, and became an actor, his relations with his father which in his boyhood were distant, owing to the permanent estrangement of his parents, were changed. Laurence, as a member of the Lyceum Company, to which he was promoted after a brief training under Frank Benson, was brought into close contact with his father. One result of this was a friendship between Laurence and his father's "leading lady" which lasted until Laurence's untimely death in 1914. The promise of a great career in the theatre was broken when the *Empress of Ireland*, with Laurence Irving on board, sank in the River St Lawrence. Ellen Terry recognised his genius in its ugly duckling stage, and seems to have understood him better than his father. "My Irving boy," as she often called him, was very dear to her, and his presence in the Lyceum Company brought her happiness at an unhappy time in her life.

4. *Ellen Terry's Third Marriage*. The brief allusion to this event at the end of the chapter is amplified in Part II, Chapter I, when I take up the narrative of Ellen Terry's life at the point where she broke it off.

CHAPTER XII

THE MACBETH PERIOD

(1888-1892)

§ I

BEFORE the production of "Macbeth" was definitely settled, Henry considered other plays. The prospects of "As You Like It" looked bright at one time, those of "The Tempest" at another. Henry was much attracted by the part of Caliban, but when I told him to go ahead and not to bother about there being no part in "The Tempest" which attracted *me*, he said: "It would never do. The young lovers are the thing in the play, and where are we going to find them?" During our "As You Like It" discussions, he told me he had no intention of playing Jacques. "I shall play Touchstone. He is in the vital part of the play." Henry put the objections to "As You Like It" so convincingly that although I was dying to play Rosalind, I believed he was right to give it up. Then we turned to other plays he was always being urged to add to his Shakespearean productions. There was talk about "King John," "Antony and Cleopatra," "Timon of Athens," "Richard II," and "Julius Cæsar," and all this talk "left me cold," even the talk about "Antony and Cleopatra," for I could not see myself as the serpent of old Nile. Besides, I knew Henry was not attracted by the part of Antony. He was intensely interested in Brutus in "Julius Cæsar." "That's the actor's part in the play," he said to me once, "because it needs acting. But the actor-manager's part is Antony, because Antony scores all along the line. Now when the claims of actor and actor-manager conflict in a play, and there is no part for *you* in it, I think it's wiser to leave that play alone." So "Julius Cæsar" was turned down, and Henry threw himself into the work of preparing the production of "Macbeth." In August 1887 we went to Scotland to get ideas for the scenes. I find an entry in my diary for that year describing a little incident in this quest for local colour. "Visited the 'Blasted Heath.' Behold a flourishing potato-field! A smooth softness everywhere. We must blast our own heath when we do Macbeth."

The rehearsals were very exhausting, but they were splendid to watch.

One of his greatest moments was in the last act after the battle. He looked like a great famished wolf, weak with the weakness of an exhausted actor can do.

His conception of Macbeth attacked, and even derided, by the critics of 1888, seemed to me then, and seems to me now, as clear as daylight. But the carrying out of the conception was unequal. Henry's imagination was sometimes his worst enemy. It tempted him to try and do more than any actor can do.

Henry had played "Macbeth" before at the Lyceum in the days of the Bateman management; he told me that by intuition he had got the right idea of the character, and had since come to know from fresh study that it was *right*. His confidence in the rightness of his conception was not in the least shaken by criticisms of it, and he always maintained that as "Macbeth" he did his finest work. "And we know when we do our best," he would add. "We are the only people who do know." Perhaps he was right in putting his Macbeth before his Hamlet, yet I think his *performance* of "Hamlet" was the greater.

"Tonight, if possible, the last act. I want to get these great multitudinous scenes over and then we can attack *our* scenes.... Your sensitiveness is so acute that you must suffer sometimes. You are not like anybody else. You see things with such lightning quickness and unerring instinct that dull fools like myself grow irritable and impatient sometimes. I feel confused when I'm thinking of one thing, and disturbed by another. That's all. But I do feel very sorry afterwards when I don't seem to heed what I so much value.... I think things are going well, considering the time we've been at it, but I see so much that is wanting that it seems almost impossible to get through properly. "Tonight, commence, Mathias. If you sleep you are lost!" (A quotation from "The Bells")

Knowing what a task I had before me, I began to get anxious and worried about "Lady Mac." Henry wrote me such a nice letter about this: "Much better than mine, Irving—much better—I'll rough it out at once!"

When the orchestra played the new version, based on that humming of Henry's, it was exactly what he wanted!

My acting edition of the play is riddled with rough sketches by him of different groups. Artists to whom I have shown them have been astonished at the spirited impressionism of these sketches. For his "purpose" Henry seems to have been able to do anything, even to draw and to compose music! Sir Arthur Sullivan's music at first did not quite please him. He walked up and down the stage humming, and showing the composer what he was going to do at certain situations. Sullivan, with wonderful quickness and open-mindedness, caught his meaning at once. "Much better than mine, Irving—much better—I'll rough it out at once!"

In this play Henry brought his manipulation of crowds to perfection.

I see in Landry a great deal of Manette—that same vacant gaze into year gone by when he crouched in his dungeon nursing his wrongs.... I shall send you another book soon to put any of your alterations and additions in. I've added a lot of little things with a few lines for you—very good, I think, though I say it as shouldnt—I know you'll laugh! They are perhaps not startlingly original, but better than the original, anyhow! Here they are—last act!

"Ah, Robert, pity me. By the recollections of our youth, I implore you to save my boy!" (*Now for 'em!*)

"If my voice calls a tone that ever fell sweetly upon your ear, have pity on me! If the past is not a blank, if you once loved, have pity on me!" (*Bravo!*) Now I call that very good, and if the "If" and the "pity" dont bring down the house, well it's a pity! I pity the pities!

...I've just been copying out my part in an account book—a little more handy to put in one's pocket. It's really very short, but difficult to act, though, and so is ours. I like this "piling up" sort of acting, and I am sure you will, when you play the part. It's restful. "The Bells" is that sort of thing.

The crafty old Henry! All this was to put me in conceit with my part! Many people at this time put me in conceit with my son, including dear Burne-Jones with his splendid gift of impulsive enthusiasm.

THE GRANGE,
WEST KENSINGTON, W.

Sunday.

MOST DEAR LADY,—

I thought all went wonderfully last night, and no sign could I see of hitch or difficulty; and as for your boy, he looked a lovely little gentleman—and in his cups was perfect, not overdoing by the least touch a part always perilously easy to overdo. I too had the impertinence to be a bit nervous for you about him, but not when he appeared—so altogether I was quite happy. ... Irving was very noble. I thought I had never seen his face so beautiful before—no, that isn't the word, and to hunt for the right one would be so like judicious criticism that I won't. Exalted and splendid it was—and you were you—YOU—and so all was well. I rather wanted more shouting and distant roar in the Bastille Scene—since the walls fell, like Jericho, by noise. A good dreadful growl always going on would have helped, I thought—and that was the only point where I missed anything.

And I was very glad you got your boy back again and that Mr Irving was ready to have his head cut off for you; so it had what I call a good ending, and I am in bright spirits today, and ever

Your real friend,

E. B.-J.

He was indeed one of my real friends, and his letters—he was a heaven-born letter-writer—were like no one else's; full of charm and

humour and feeling. Once when I was starting for a long tour in America he sent me a picture with this particularly charming letter:

MY DEAR MISS TERRY,—

I never have the courage to throw you a huge bouquet as I should like to—so in default I send you a little sign of my homage and admiration. I made it purposely for you, which is its only excellence, and thought nothing but gold good enough to paint with for you—and now it's done, I am woefully disappointed. It looks such a poor wretch of a thing, and there is no time to make another before you go, so look mercifully upon it—it did mean so well—as you would upon a foolish friend, not holding it up to the light, but putting it in a corner and never showing it.

As to what it is about, I think it's a little scene in Heaven (I am always pretending to know so much about that place!) a sort of patrol going to look to the battlements, some such thought as in Marlowe's lovely line: "Now walk the angels on the walls of Heaven." But I wanted it to be so different, and my old eyes cannot help me to finish it as I want—so forgive it and accept it with all its accompanying crowd of good wishes to you. They were always in my mind as I did it.

And come back soon from that America and stay here, and never go away again. Indeed I do wish you boundless happiness, and for our sake, such a length of life that you might shudder if I were to say how long.

Ever your poor artist,

E. B.-J.

If it is so faint that you can scarcely see it, let that stand for modest humility and shyness—as if I had only dared to whisper.

Another time, when I had sent him a trifle for some charity, he wrote:

This morning came the delightful crinkly paper that always means you! If anybody else ever used it, I think I should assault them! I certainly wouldn't read their letter or answer it.

And I know the cheque will be very useful. If I thought much about those wretched homes, or saw them often, I should do no more work, I know. There is but one thing to do—to help with a little money if you can manage it, and then try hard to forget. Yes, I am certain that I should never paint again if I saw much of those hopeless lives that have no remedy. I know of such a dear lad about my Phil's age who has felt this so sharply that he has given his happy, lucky, petted life to give himself wholly to share their squalor and unlovely lives—doing all he can, of evenings when his work is over, to amuse such as have the heart to be amused, reading to them and telling them about histories and what not—anything he knows that can entertain them. And this he has daily done for about a year, and if he carries it on for his life-time he shall have such a nimbus that he will look top-heavy with it.

No, you would always have been lovely and made some beauty about you if you had been born there—but I should have got drunk and beaten

my family and been altogether horrible! When everything goes just as I like, and painting prospers a bit, and the air is warm and friends well and everything perfectly comfortable, I can just manage to behave decently, and a spoilt fool I am—that's the truth. But wherever you were, some garden would grow.

Yes, I know Winchelsea and Rye and Lympne and Hythe—all bonny places, and Hythe has a church it may be proud of. Under the sea is another Winchelsea, a poor drowned city—about a mile out at sea, I think, always marked in old maps as "Winchelsea Dround." If ever the sea goes back on that changing coast there may be great fun when the spires and towers come up again. It's a pretty land to drive in.

I am growing downright stupid—I can't work at all nor think of anything. Will my wits ever come back to me?

And when are you coming back—when will the Lyceum be in its right-ful hands again? I refuse to go there till you come back...

I have finished four pictures: come and tell me if they will do. I have worked so long at them that I know nothing about them, but I want you to see them—and like them if you can.

All Saturday and Sunday and Monday they are visible. Come any time you can that suits you best—only come.

I do hope you will like them. If you don't you must really pretend to, else I shall be heartbroken. And if I knew what time you would come and which day, I would get Margaret here.

I have had them about four years—long before I knew you, and now they are done and I can hardly believe it. But tell me pretty pacifying lies and say you like them, even if you find them rubbish.

Your devoted and affectionate
E. B.-J.

I went the next day to see the pictures with Eddy. They were the "Briar Rose" series. They were *beautiful*. The lovely Lady Granby (now Duchess of Rutland) was there—reminding me, as always, of the reflection of something in water on a misty day. When she was Miss Violet Lindsay she did a drawing of me as Portia in the doctor's robes, which I think is very like me, as well as having all the charming qualities of her well-known pencil portraits.

§ 3

Plays adapted from novels are generally unsatisfactory. A whole story cannot be conveyed in three hours, and every reader of the story looks for something not in the play. Wills took from "The Vicar of Wake-field" an episode, and did it right well, but there was no *episode* in "The Bride of Lammermoor" for Merivale to take. He tried to traverse the whole ground, and failed. But he gave me some lovely things to do in

Lucy Ashton. I had to lose my poor wits, as in Ophelia, in the last act, and with hardly a word to say I was able to make an effect. The love scene at the well I did nicely too.

Seymour Lucas designed splendid dresses for this play. My "Ravenswood" riding dress set a fashion in ladies' coats for quite a long time. Mine was copied by Mr Lucas from a leather coat of Lord Mohun's. He is said to have had it on when he was killed. At any rate there was a large stab in the back of the coat, and a blood-stain. "Nance Oldfield" was my first speculation in play-buying! I saw it acted, and thought I could do something with it. Henry would not buy it, so I did! He let me do it first in front of a revival of "The Corsican Brothers" in 1891. It was a great success, although my son and I did not know a word on the first night and had our parts written out and pinned all over the furniture on the stage! Dear old Mr Howe wrote to me that Teddy's performance was "more than creditable; it was exceedingly good and full of character, and with your own charming performance the piece was a great success." Since 1891 I must have played "Nance Oldfield" hundreds of times, but I never had an Alexander Oldworthy so good as my son, although such talented actors as Marton Harvey, Laurence Irving and, more recently, Harcourt Williams and O. P. Heggie have all played the part.

§ 3

THE Lyceum production of "Henry VIII" (1892) was magnificent, but I was not keenly interested in it, or in my part.

Henry's pride as Cardinal Wolsey was the thing, not my pride as the Spanish Queen. How wonderful he looked (though not fat and self-indulgent like the pictures of the real Wolsey) in his flame-coloured robes! He had the silk dyed specially by the dyers to the Cardinal's College in Rome. Seymour Lucas designed the clothes. This letter from Burne-Jones about "Henry VIII" is a delightful tribute to Henry Irving's treatment of the play:

MY DEAR LADY,—

We went last night to the play (at my theatre) to see Henry VIII—Margaret and Mackail and I. It was delicious to go out again and see mankind, after such evil days. How kind they were to me no words can say—I went in at a private door and then into a cosy box and back the same way, swiftly, and am marvellously the better for the adventure. No you, alas!

I have written to Mr Irving just to thank him for his great kindness in making the path of pleasure so easy, for I go tremblingly at present. But I could not say to him what I thought of the Cardinal—a sort of shame keeps one from saying to an artist what one thinks of his work—but to you I can

silver, because it was the *wrong* side! Mrs Carr, having got the right silver, started on another quest for the right gold. She found it at last in some gold lace antimacassars at Whiteleys! From these base materials she and Mrs Nettleship constructed a magnificent dress fit for a Spanish Queen. Its only fault was that it was terribly heavy.

But the weight I can carry on the stage has often amazed me. I remember that for "King Arthur" Mrs Nettleship made me a splendid cloak embroidered all over with a pattern in jewels. At the dress-rehearsal when I made my entrance the cloak swept magnificently, and I daresay looked fine, but I knew at once that I should never be able to act in it. I called out to Mrs Nettleship and Alice Carr, who were in the stalls, and implored them to lighten it of some of the jewels.

"Oh, do keep it as it is," they answered, "it looks splendid."

"I can't breathe in it, much less act in it. Please send some one up to cut off a few stones."

I went on with my part, and then, during a wait, two of Mrs Nettleship's assistants came on to the stage and snipped off a jewel here and there. When they had filled a basket, I began to feel better!

But when they tried to lift that basket, their united efforts could not move it!

§ 4

DURING these great days at the Lyceum, Henry frequently gave suppers in the Beefsteak Room, once the meeting-place of the famous old Beefsteak Club. It was used as a lumber-room when Henry first became manager of the Lyceum; he restored it, hung pictures of actors and actresses on the panelled walls, put in a grill, a huge dining-table, and lighted it to perfection. It was a dignified and yet a cosy room, approached from the stage by a series of narrow and rather tortuous staircases. All the most famous and interesting people of the day climbed to the Beefsteak Room at Henry's invitation. I wish I had kept a record of the guests. Now when I conjure up a picture of the room, the faces are clear for a minute, then become dim and vanish. I recall an evening in 1891 when the Princess of Wales¹—she was then Princess May of Teck—came to supper with her mother Princess Mary. It was her birthday, and she had chosen a visit to the Lyceum as a birthday treat, which was a great compliment to us. It was by no means the only time she and her mother were honoured "Beefsteak" guests.

Another face I see is that of Lady Dorothy Nevill, an old lady of the old aristocratic school. She was an ardent playgoer, and one of the most clever and amusing guests at the "Beefsteak" suppers. She dressed her

¹ Now Queen Mary.

mischievous he could be about some of his guests. I remember some on saying to him after the first night of "Kavenswood": "I don't fancy that your hopes will be quite fulfilled about the play. I heard one or two in the Beefsteak Room on Saturday night—"

"Ah, yes!" Henry interrupted in his most gentle voice. "But they were friends! One must not expect too much from friends. The paying public will, I think, decide favourably."

"This is the Irving, the Irving at play, you can see in the Bastien-Lepage portrait. The artist was enchanted with Henry's face and expressed a strong desire to paint him. The portrait originated at a supper in the Beefsteak Room at which both Bastien-Lepage and Sarah Bernhardt were guests. The artist did a sketch of Henry on a sheet of note-paper, then another of Sarah, and gave them to me. They are among my most precious relics. Henry gave Bastien-Lepage two sittings for the portrait afterwards at Grafton Street, but it is a "Beefsteak" portrait all the same.

How brilliantly, delightfully and whimsically Alfred Gilbert talked to me the other day, when I met him again in Bruges, of Beefsteak suppers at which he had been present! He is the man who can make you live them, and first nights at the Lyceum, over again! I think it was after one of these suppers that he took the whole party to drink at the fountain in Piccadilly Circus the night before his statue of Eros was unveiled. Years later, another sculptor, George Frampton, told me of his certainty that the statue would stand the test of time, and hold its own with the finest work of the same kind done by the great masters of the Renaissance period. "I have no patience with people who criticise it as inappropriate to its surroundings. That is the fault of the surroundings. In a more enlightened age than this, Piccadilly Circus will be destroyed and rebuilt merely to provide a finer setting for Gilbert's jewel."

We were, as he spoke, looking at Henry's death-mask, which Frampton had taken, and the dead face dissolved into that living one with the quizzed expression which it wore at the Beefsteak suppers. Then came a vision of Alfred Gilbert's Beethoven-like head with its lion-like mane of raven hair, and I began to cry. Henry dead, and Gilbert in exile. Neither appreciated in this age as they should be. The Beefsteak Room a lumber-room again, if it exists at all in the rebuilt Lyceum!

NOTES TO CHAPTER XII

1. *The Lyceum Problem*. When Henry Irving in the year 1878 engaged Ellen Terry as his "leading lady," it is improbable, as he had no personal knowledge of her remarkable powers, that he foresaw the problem which was to arise out of the engagement. This was, briefly stated, to find plays with

with you. "The School for Saints" was, as it were, a born biography. But the Lieven-Guizot idea is a play.

Yours ever affectionately,
PEARL MARY THERESA CRAIGIE.

In another letter she writes (how tersely!): "I am changing all my views about so-called 'literary' dialogue. It means pedantry. The great thing is to be natural."

My portrait as Lady Macbeth by Sargent used to hang in the alcove in the Beefsteak Room when it was not away at some exhibition, and the artist and I have often supped under it. I have always loved the picture, and think it is far more like me than any other. Mr Sargent first of all thought that he would paint me at the moment when Lady Macbeth comes out of the castle to welcome Duncan. He liked the swirl of the dress, and the torches, and the women bowing down on either side. He used to make me walk up and down his studio until I nearly dropped in my heavy dress, saying suddenly as I got the swirl:—"That's it, that's it!" and rushing off to his canvas to throw on some paint in his wonderful inimitable fashion!

But he had to give up *that* idea of the Lady Macbeth picture all the same. I was the gainer, for he gave me the unfinished sketch, and it is certainly very beautiful.

By this sketch hangs a tale of Mr Sargent's great-heartedness. When the details of my jubilee performance at Drury Lane were being arranged, the Committee decided to ask certain distinguished artists to contribute to the programme. They were all delighted about it, and such busy men as Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema, Mr Abbey, Mr Byam Shaw, Mr Walter Crane, Mr Bernard Partridge, Mr James Pryde, Mr Orpen, and Mr William Nicholson all gave some of their work to me. Mr Sargent was asked if he would allow the first Lady Macbeth study to be reproduced. He found that it would not reproduce well, so in the height of the season and of his work with fashionable sitters, he did an entirely new black and white painting of the same subject, which *would* reproduce! This act of friendship I could never forget even if the picture were not in front of me at this minute to remind me of it. "You must think of me as one of the people bowing down to you in the picture," he wrote to me when he sent the new version for the programme. Nothing during my jubilee celebrations touched me more than this wonderful kindness of Mr Sargent's.

Henry never cared much about "going into society," but as the host of "Society" in the Beefsteak Room, he thoroughly enjoyed himself. His face at those suppers was alive with raffish humour, and mischief. Very

time, but stands rather higher in the esteem of connoisseurs now than it did in 1906. Ellen Terry's high opinion of it in 1888, expressed long before its merits had been proclaimed, has been abundantly vindicated.

3. *Lady Macbeth's Dress*. Graham Robertson recalls that Oscar Wilde remarked apropos of the dress immortalised in Sargent's picture: "Judging from the banquet, Lady Macbeth seems an economical housekeeper, and evidently patronises local industries for her husband's clothes and the servants' liveries; but she takes care to do all her own shopping in Byzantium."

4. *The Sargent Sketches*. The oil sketch in black and white Sargent made after her death, and is now in the National Portrait Gallery. The coloured sketch is still in the possession of Edith Craig, who has lent it to the Ellen Terry Memorial Museum at Smalldyke.

5. *Irving's Wolsey Dress*. Ellen Terry was mistaken in thinking that the silk for this dress was dyed in Rome. It was woven and dyed in her own birth-place of Coventry. "This is one of the wrong little things that must be made right little things when the book is reprinted" she wrote on the margin of the first edition.

6. *Alfred Gilbert*. This gifted sculptor returned from his exile in Bruges, not long after Ellen Terry's death, to work in London on a memorial monument to Queen Alexandra, which was opened in June 1932. His breach with the Royal Academy has been healed, and he is, once more R. A. He was knighted after the opening of the Memorial. Frampton's prophecy about Gilbert's *Eros* has been partly fulfilled. Piccadilly Circus has been rebuilt, and if the motive was not to provide "a finer setting for Gilbert's jewel," the jewel certainly shines more bright in the new Circus than in the old.

7. The parts played by Ellen Terry during the period covered by Chapter XII were: Lady Macbeth ("Macbeth," 1887); Catharine Duval ("The Dead Heart," 1889); Lucy Ashton ("Ravenswood," 1890); Nance Oldfield ("Nance Oldfield," 1891); Katharine ("Henry VIII," 1891).

CHAPTER XIII
THE END OF THE LYCEUM
(1892-1902)

§ I

I REMAINED exactly ten years more with Henry Irving after the production of "Henry VIII." During that time the vogue of the Lyceum declined, very gradually, and not always perceptibly to us, for we had ups as well as downs, and the ups created an illusion that nothing was changed. I know I did not realise at the time that the position of the theatre as an unique institution was changed by the opening of Her Majesty's Theatre in 1897. Mr Beerbohm Tree (now Sir Herbert Tree) shortly afterwards began a series of sumptuous productions of Shakespeare's plays which eventually became as fashionable as Henry's had been in the 'eighties and early 'nineties.

Of the productions at the Lyceum in its "twilight of the gods" period, "Cymbeline" was the most notable for me. I think as Imogen I gave the *only* inspired performance of these last rather sad years, when Henry had to fight ill-health as well as ill-luck. Yet I felt far from inspired on the first night. I wrote in my diary the next day (September 23, 1896): "Nothing seemed right. Everything was so slow, so slow. I didnt feel a bit inspired, only dull and hide-bound." Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema did the designs for the scenery and dresses in "Cymbeline," and I have to thank him for one of the loveliest dresses I ever wore.

Somehow these productions seem too near for me to see them properly. "King Lear," "King Arthur," "Becket," "Madame Sans-Gêne," "Peter the Great," "The Medicine Man"—they are all still in the foreground of my memory; I feel I could write about them more easily if they were further off. Before "King Lear" I wrote in my diary (January 18, 1892): "H. I. is hard at work, studying Lear. This is what only a great man would do at such a moment in the hottest blush of success" (I was referring to his triumph as Wolsey in "Henry VIII" which was still running then). "No swelled head—only fervent endeavour to do better work. The fools hardly conceive what he is." Later after the night of "Lear" I wrote: "H. was just marvellous, but indistinct in

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snow, and each one who managed to reach the theatre was worth a hundred on an ordinary night.

At the hotel I put up holly and mistletoe, and produced from my trunks a real Christmas pudding that my mother had made. We had it for supper, and it was very good.

It never does to repeat an experiment. Next year at Pittsburgh my little son Teddy brought me out another pudding from England. For once we were in an uncomfortable hotel, and the Christmas dinner was deplorable. It began with *burned hare soup*.

"It seems to me," said Henry, "that we aren't going to get anything to eat, but we'll make up for it by drinking!"

He had brought his own wine out with him from England, and the company took him at his word and *did* make up for it!

"Never mind!" I said, as the soup was followed by worse and worse. "There's my pudding!"

It came on blazing, and looked superb. Henry tasted it.

"Very odd," he said, "but I think this is a camphor pudding."

He said it so politely, as if he might easily be mistaken!

My maid in England had packed the pudding with my furs! It simply reeked of camphor.

So we had to dine on Henry's wine and L. F. Austin's wit. This brilliant man, now dead, acted for many years as Henry's secretary, and one of his gifts was the happy knack of hitting off people's peculiarities in rhyme. This dreadful Christmas dinner at Pittsburgh was enlivened by a collection of such rhymes, which Mr. Austin called a "Lycæum Christmas Play."

Every one roared with laughter until it came to the verse of which he was the victim, when suddenly he found the fun rather poor!

The first verse was spoken by Loveday, who announces that the "Governor" has a new play which is "*Wonderful*", a great word of Loveday's.

George Alexander replies:

But I say, Loveday, have I got a part in it,
That I can wear a cloak in and look smart in it?
Not that I care a fig for gaudy show, dear boy—
But juveniles must *look* well, don't you know, dear boy.
And shall I lordly hall and tuns of claret own?
And may I murmur love in dulcet baritone?
Tell me at least, this simple fact of it—
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Once when Allen was rehearsing the supers in the Church Scene in "Much Ado about Nothing," we overheard him "show the sense" in Shakespeare like this:

"This 'Ero let me tell you is a perfect lady, a nice, innocent young thing, and when the feller she's engaged to calls 'er an 'approved wanton,' you naturally claps yer 'ands to yer swords. A wanton is a kind of —well, you know she ain't what she ought to be!"

Allen would then proceed to read the part of Claudio:

... not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

Seven or eight times the supers clapped their "'ands to their swords" without giving Allen satisfaction.

"No, no, no, that's not a bit like it, not a bit! If any of your sisters was 'ere and you 'eard me call 'er a —, would yer stand gapin' at me as if this was a bloomin' 'tea party?'"

Louis Austin's little "Lyceum Play" was presented to me with a silver tea-service, a souvenir from the gentlemen of the company, and ended up with the following pretty lines spoken by Katie Brown, a clever little girl who played all the small pages' parts at this time:

Although I'm but a little page,
Who waits for Portia's kind behest,
Mine is the part upon this stage
To tell the plot you have not guessed.
Dear lady, oft in Belmont's hall,
Whose mistress is so sweet and fair,
Your humble slaves would gladly fall
Upon their knees, and praise you there.
To offer you this little gift,
Dear Portia, now we crave your leave,
And let it have the grace to lift
Our hearts to yours this Christmas eve.
And so we pray that you may live
Thro' many, many, happy years,
And feel what you so often give—
The joy that is akin to tears!

How nice of Louis Austin! It quite made up for my mortification over the camphor pudding!

Pittsburgh has been called "hell with the lid off," and other insulting names. I have always thought it beautiful, especially at night when its turnaces make it look like a city of flame. The lovely park that the city